

A

COLORADO
COLONEL



AND
OTHER
SKETCHES.

BY
WILLIAM CAREY CAMPBELL.

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THE ROUGH RIDER.

A COLORADO COLONEL

AND OTHER SKETCHES

BY

WILLIAM CAREY CAMPBELL

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TOPEKA, KANSAS

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To my Wife.

A FEW of these stories have heretofore been published. Acknowledgment is made to the *Overland Monthly* for its kind permission to publish herein "The Passing of Jack Thompson," and "A Cat Creek Conversion;" also, to *Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly* for its kind permission to publish herein "Christmas on the Huerfano," and "Pike's Peak by Moonlight."

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A Colorado Colonel.

CHAPTER I.

A PARTING.

“By th’ Great Horn Spoon! wimmen is cur’us things!” observed old John Hargrave, wiping the sweat from his wrinkled forehead and seating himself upon a more than well-filled trunk at whose straps he had just been tugging.

Presently, as though his statement needed some qualification, he added meekly: “Ef it wasn’t fuss an’ feathers an’ a-tryin’ ter ram-jam every last thing into one measley trunk, it might be somethin’ wuss. But, I reckon, ef th’ Almighty hed made ’em dif’rent, us men-folks ’ud still kick,—men an’ mules is born kickers, Rebeccer.”

“Patience is a virtue possessed by but few men—very few!” reproached his sister-in-law, looking at him through gold-rimmed glasses and shaking her gray curls in a mildly deprecating way.

“But, see here, Rebeccer, you must own up thet Patience has her limit. Puttin’ in one little old 32-inch trunk all th’ female frills an’ fine fixin’s an’ medicines an’ tracts what hed orter go in six or seven, is—is—well, it’s a dumbbed sight more’n ord’nary Christian grace was calkerlated ter run up agin. What?” And he fanned himself with a broad-brimmed hat known in that part of Kansas as a “straw-pile.”

“Profanity, brother John,” rejoined the sister-in-law,

ignoring his argument with womanly evasiveness, "is a most grievous sin, which some men — *many farmers*, I fear — will have to answer for some day." And she again tossed her curls, wrapping up and tucking away the while a bottle of camphor in a small valise that was already quite choked.

Something unusual was evidently taking place on those early-summer days when the soft winds swept like a caress over the prairies and in at the open windows of the Hargrave cottage. An old green trunk had been brought from its hiding-place in the attic, and ransacked, repaired, and many times packed and repacked in order that it might go again into the busy world to which it had for many years now been a stranger,—a trunk in whose tray was a bundle of letters and dim daguerreotypes daintily tied with a bit of blue ribbon on which were faded spots,—tear-stains or time-stains, who knows?—things that were yet very precious to their owner, Rebecca Norwood, ("Aunt Rebecca," she was generally called,) the maiden aunt of Agnes Hargrave.

They were about to go away for the summer,—were Agnes and her aunt,—and when two women, one of whom is an invalid of uncertain years, make ready for such a journey there is, as Col. Ferguson once said of a frightful railroad wreck from which he barely escaped with his life, "more or less mixed confusion."

It seems that Aunt Rebecca's ailment, whatever it was, failed to yield to medical treatment, and her physician had availed himself of the not uncommon expedient of advising a change of scene and climate,—advice that often relieves a doctor of much responsibility, no matter whether

it prove beneficial to the patient or not; hence, it had been decided that she should spend the summer in Colorado and that Agnes should go with her.

Agnes Hargrave, tall, graceful and artless, was considered the most beautiful girl in the town. She had a lover, a briefless young lawyer named Robert Morton, to whom, so the gossips said, she was engaged; and doubtless they were right, for he demurred to her going away, and argued the matter with all the zeal of a lawyer who feels that he must win his first case or be voted a failure forever. But Aunt Rebecca Norwood, to whom the case was referred, overruled his plea, and he had to abide by the decision and to content himself with the poor solace of promised letters. As for Aunt Rebecca's going, her religion—a sort of chronic eruption of the emotions—made a temporary separation from her something to which he could easily reconcile himself.

Time brings an end to all things, and so at last the trunks were ready, and Aunt Rebecca with numerous boxes, bundles and bags was helped into a carriage, and Agnes kissed her father an affectionate good-by.

“Now, don't ye fall in love ner flirt with th' men, Rebeccer,” cautioned her brother, removing his broad-brimmed straw hat in order the better to mop his forehead; and adding, slyly, “Hev ye got a-plenty o' ammernition—them latest tracts on ‘Does Proherbition Perhibit?’ an’ ‘Avarice a Sin,’ an’ so on?”

Aunt Rebecca having allayed his fears on the points indicated, he turned to his daughter and said:

“Ef ye meet up out there with a man named Golden S. Ferguson, ask him whuther that corner lot in Timber-

line Addition, which he sold to me a couple o' years back, is wuth payin' more taxes on. Must be a smooth duck, that Ferguson. Roped me slick enough, an' I never laid eyes on him. Them ads. o' his'n was great ketchers, I tell ye!"

"How I wish, papa, that you were going with us," said Agnes, making a mental note of his request. "I dislike so to leave you here all alone."

"Don't worry a little bit 'bout me, Aggie. I'll drive out to th' farm every mornin' an' back agin in th' evenin'. I'll hev a scrumptious time a-batchin'. 'Twill mind me o' them days when yer ma an' me come to th' Territory, only then we didn't hev no Woman's Exchange where ye could git ready-made cake, an' pies, an' salt-risin' bread."

"There's blackberry jam on the top shelf of the pantry, John," suggested Aunt Rebecca, again counting her articles of baggage to make sure that none had been forgotten.

"You folks hed better be a-goin', I guess, or ye'll be left behind," observed the old farmer to the driver; who thereupon cracked his whip, and away they dashed down the road that wound in and out through a forest of tall sunflowers.

"Well, by gum! I wonder what in mischief they're a-comin' back fer?" exclaimed the old man as he saw the carriage turn about. In a moment it was in front of the gate, and Aunt Rebecca called out in thin, nervous notes,

"Tickets, John, tickets!"

"Jes' like a conductor fer all th' world. Hain't they in among yer wampum in yer wallet?" he asked.

"No, no. I've looked there twice," said she in a

state of great perturbation, and looking again into that receptacle.

"Well, I'll be darned! I sure see ye put 'em in there when ye was a-sittin' a-waitin' on th' sofa in th' parlor."

"Don't swear about it, brother. It does no good, and besides, what will Mr. Ashmore here think of you? I hope that you, Mr. Ashmore, don't use profanity. It is such a dreadful—" but Ashmore was now busy with a buckle that seemed to demand his immediate attention.

"Mebbe yer put 'em in th' bosom o' yer dress so's to be out o' reach o' train robbers," suggested her brother.

"Oh, yes, *now* I know where they are," said Aunt Rebecca with suffused face. "You may drive on, Mr. Ashmore. Do you think we shall miss the train? Well, no matter. If we do, it's because an all-wise Providence has so ordered it." And she sank back resignedly upon the cushions.

Ashmore then said something which fortunately Aunt Rebecca did not hear,—she was slightly deaf,—but the horses seemed to understand that, if they did not spring to their work, that familiar word, whatever it was, would be swiftly followed by the lash.

When at last they reached the red brick station they found Morton there impatiently walking up and down the platform. The train was already in, and they barely had time to check the baggage and to exchange the usual avowals of affection and promises to write which every traveler has either experienced or observed.

"A-l-l a-b-o-a-r-d!" called the conductor.

"Good-by, you dear fellow," whispered Agnes to Morton.

"Good-by, sweetheart," he returned, holding her little hand as if he could not let it go.

Agnes may have expected Morton to kiss her, but it would be the first time in public, and therefore when her face emerged from the eclipse it was suffused with that delicious tint which mantles nothing with its beauty save the cheeks of a young woman having the sweet consciousness of a man's complete adoration.

The train steamed away, and Robert Morton felt as though the sun had been suddenly blotted out of the heavens. With heavy heart he went direct to his office and began a letter telling someone of the many fine things he had intended to say to her at parting.

CHAPTER II.

IN A SLEEPING-CAR.

AUNT REBECCA was awake very early next morning. Raising the curtain of her window, she expected to see the rugged walls of the Rocky Mountains, but instead was a far-reaching plain. An electric button, pushed by her as though quite used to summoning a servant in that manner, quickly brought the porter to four little, grayish, corkscrew curls (two on either temple) at a point where the curtains of a berth were carefully held together beneath a chin — a scene suggesting the illusion sometimes advertised as “The Living Head without a Body.”

“Porter,” she said in a rather loud voice, “I thought you said last night that we should see the Peak at daylight. Where is it, sir?”

“Yas’m. Thet’s right. Yer ken see it ef yer jes’ elevates yo vision to de propah latitude,” and he grinned so broadly that Aunt Rebecca found herself looking at his beautiful white teeth instead of out of the opposite window to which he pointed.

“Doan’ yer see dat leetle white patch o’ snow way up yondah thet looks sumfin like a tuf’ o’ wool on an’ ole nigger’s head?” he said in a low tone, and again pointing.

“No. I don’t see it. Where?”

“Hyah, jes’ foller de pint o’ my finger. See!”

While Aunt Rebecca was vainly trying to catch a glimpse of the peak, the train slackened its speed, and shortly stopped.

"What's the matter now? Have we broken down? It's an accident: I'm sure it is, or train-robbers! What shall we do? Are you a praying man, sir?" cried Aunt Rebecca in a state of great nervous excitement.

"Doan' be 'larmed, ma'am. We jes' stopped quick ter let No. 2 go by. She's late," said the porter reassuringly and in a tone which plainly said "For heaven's sake, please don't wake up the whole car!"

"We should be very thankful,—very thankful! Now, if you will show me again where Pike's Peak is," said Aunt Rebecca, quieting down somewhat.

"Yas'm." He pointed again, and from a near-by berth a man with a deep voice yawned audibly.

"Why, not down there. Impossible!" said Aunt Rebecca, finding it difficult to get her eyes from the zenith.

"It doan' look so pow'ful high at fust, ma'am. It doan' fer a fac'," observed the porter. And Aunt Rebecca by the aid of a Polonius-like imagination now believed that she vaguely discerned a something in the distant sky which must be the peak.

"How far is it?" she asked.

"Mighty nigh a hundred mile, ma'am."

"Impossible! Have you ever read a tract called, 'Truth, or the Way to Glory'? I'll give you one when I get up, if you'll promise to read it," said Aunt Rebecca seriously.

"Saw off!" roared the deep voice in the near-by berth.

"What was that?" asked Aunt Rebecca, alarmedly.

"Spec dat was de cow-boy in upper 9 what got on at Coolidge," said the porter.

"What does he want to saw off?" asked Aunt Rebecca, innocently.

The porter was too convulsed with laughter to answer.

"Oh! I see," said Aunt Rebecca, believing that she had fathomed the mystery. "Nightmare. Eh?"

The porter managed to nod an assent, and the man in No. 9 said something which Aunt Rebecca did not catch the meaning of. There was now half-suppressed laughter coming from several berths, and a fretful baby began to cry.

"Is he ill? Perhaps some of my peppermint would do him good," suggested Aunt Rebecca, generously, but the occupant of No. 9, supposing that she referred to him, grumbled out,

"No. He's not ill, but devilish tired."

Judging from the titter and grumbling, the whole car was now awake excepting Agnes, who was a very sound sleeper. A little fellow with a big nose stuck out his head and called to the porter:

"See here! I bays my monies for von double lower, unt I wants shleep, so hellup me gr-racious, or I sues der tam Bullman Combany for damages. I tells you vat I do, I rebort you to der office as soon as ve reaches Denver, by der Holy Moses!"

No sooner had the head disappeared than Aunt Rebecca, feeling that the porter had been unjustly censured, felt called upon to say:

"Porter, if that wicked man reports you, you let me know, and I'll report him for using profane language in a public conveyance."

At this juncture Agnes wakened, and prevailed upon her aunt to lie down, just as the cow-boy called out,

“Round up yer tongues!”

“Did you ever hear anything so rude?” whispered Aunt Rebecca, pulling up a blanket.

“Well, go to sleep now, please,” said Agnes, sleepily.

“I saw Pike’s Peak anyway,” said Aunt Rebecca with a pronounced satisfaction in her tone, and adding, “That’s such a nice porter. I don’t know whether he’s a professor of religion or not, but he’s certainly very obliging. Don’t let me forget to give him a dime.”

Aunt Rebecca was too excited to go to sleep, and besides, she was afraid of missing some of the scenery, and so for a long time she gazed out of the window at the fringe of cottonwoods that mark the sinuous windings of the Arkansas river, while now and then a field of dark-green alfalfa with its irregular lines of irrigating-ditches seemed to fly past. Before long the train cut through some high sand-hills, and rows of houses sprang up, Aladdin-like, and great clouds of smoke from high chimneys drifted lazily away into the clearest blue sky that she had ever seen.

It was Smelter City.

When the train stopped at the large, red-stone station, Aunt Rebecca saw for the first time some narrow-gauge cars, and it was with difficulty that she refrained from wakening Agnes. Shortly the train started, and circled round among squalid-looking shanties and *adobes*, and in front of one, lazily sunning himself, sat a swarthy man. Aunt Rebecca could restrain herself no longer.

“Look, look, Agnes, quick!”

Agnes sprang up, rubbing her eyes.

"Too late. It's gone," said Aunt Rebecca, adding, "you don't know what you missed. Wonderful!"

"What was it?"

"A man!"

"Oh, pshaw! Was that all?"

"Never mind, dear; I'll tell you when I see another."

"Please don't," pleaded Agnes, drowsily.

"But," protested Aunt Rebecca, "it was a real, live Mexican, I do believe."

"I don't care if he was the President of the Republic of Mexico," returned rather petulantly the girl whom Morton believed to be the sweetest creature that ever lived.

"*Breakfus' now ready in th' dining-kyah! Las' kyah in th' reah. B-r-e-a-k-f-u-s'!*" came along down the aisle, the words measuring the exact length of the car.

While they were eating breakfast, Aunt Rebecca kept a running fire of *ohs* and *ahs* as she gazed through the broad windows at the distant mountains on the left or the broad expanse of prairies on the right.

A little later the porter, while brushing off Aunt Rebecca's gray ulster, told her of a passenger who had just given him a silver dollar.

"Mercy! Who is he?" asked she, the amount of the tip seeming to her to be a piece of reckless extravagance.

"Col. Ferguson, ma'am. Never heah of Col. Ferguson of Colorado? Ter'ble fine gen'leman! Guess he owns a dozen big gold mines up at Oro Grande. Often rides wid me, an' he always jes' dat lavish an' prodigal gen'rous. He's in de smokin'-room now, an' you all 'll see him when he gits in his kerridge at de depot."

And so they did — a man rather below medium height, of well-knit frame sufficiently rounded to justify an expectation of jovial good-nature, and hair and mustache of that peculiar shade into which the usual evidence of advancing years is slow to come, hence he might have been forty-five or even sixty years of age without violation of the probabilities. He wore a soft, light-colored hat, a neat-fitting suit, and in his shirt-front was a diamond of considerable size. There was a slight limp in his gait, but, aided by a cane, he went briskly to an open carriage, sprang lightly in, and was driven hurriedly down a broad street lined on either side with large cottonwood trees.

The mail-pouch that was thrown off at Cameo Springs that morning contained this letter:

KAWSVILLE, July 7th.

Henry Eisler, M. D., Cameo Springs, Colo. :

MY DEAR OLD CHUM—I send you by to-day's train a patient who will present a letter from me. I think you will agree with me as to the treatment she needs. Your glorious climate, famous mineral waters, new social surroundings, and an occasional *placebo* will do the business. She is accompanied by her niece, a very charming young woman. I warn you not to fall in love with her, —I mean the niece,—for she's engaged. The aunt is, however, fancy-free, I believe!

Seriously, they are nice folks, and I want you to be good to them, and as reasonable in your charges as it is possible for a Colorado doctor to be.

With best wishes, believe me,

Faithfully and fraternally,

E. BONESET.

CHAPTER III.

COL. FERGUSON INTRODUCES HIMSELF.

It was about this time that a woman came to Cameo Springs,— “The gem of the Rockies,” it is often called,— and to the same hotel at which Aunt Rebecca and Agnes were, and registered her name and the word “Boston” in an angular hand. Were she able to trace her ancestry back to the Mayflower itself it would not be at all surprising, for she had that expression of aristocratic austerity common to folk conscious of their superiority or their wealth.

As she turned from the counter a rather stout man stepped spryly up to her.

“Excuse me, ma’am,” he said, his face beaming; “I’m Ferguson — Ferguson of Colorado — formerly of Smelter City. Real estate an’ insurance there, insurance an’ mines here — Oro Grande gold propersitions a speciality. You’re jest in th’ nick of time — bully good chances now. Here’s my card. Ev’rybody knows me, th’ old, reliable —”

The new guest here looked appealingly toward the clerk, who thereupon sounded a noisy gong and called out “*Front!*” and a red-headed and blinking boy in a blue uniform ambled forward.

“Show Mrs. Boylston up to Parlor C,” said the clerk, handing the boy a key.

“*Adios!* Pleasant dreams! See you later!” persisted the man whose card had been taken with all the grace a woman commands when in doubt as to whether to take

offense or not. Ah, who can tell what flits through the mind of a woman when an audacious fellow ruthlessly sets aside conventionalities, yet does it so lightly and trippingly that his very breach of good manners is well calculated to provoke a smile?

The bell-boy, having gathered up sundry bundles and bags, was closely followed by the fair, fat and forty-five newcomer. And, watching the woman's stout figure disappear through the hall, stood Ferguson, with head thrown back, a thumb in either arm-hole of his vest, and an unlighted cigar of doubtful fragrance between his lips.

When Mrs. Boylston reached Parlor C she at once indulged a woman's curiosity by reading the card she had brought up in her hand.

"Who was that queer man?" she asked of the boy.

"What does th' card say?" said he with a seeming, though unintended, impertinence,—for he wished to speak by the card.

"Golden S. Ferguson," she answered, reading the name through gold-rimmed eye-glasses.

"That's straight. Didn't know but what it said *Colonel* Ferguson, fer that's what most folks calls him," he answered.

"Is he an army officer on furlough?" she asked.

"Well—er—I don't guess," faltered the bunch of freckles, and squinting his eyes the better to make out the manner of woman with whom he was dealing.

"Retired, perhaps?" she suggested, interrogatively.

"Retired," repeated the boy in a dazed sort of way. "Why, he couldn't git ter bed this quick, though he's sure swift in doin' most things. Never turns in afore

midnight. He's the owliest feller you ever see, an' as fer gettin' up in th' morning', say, he's a bird."

"Is the Colonel in business here?"

"I should smile. Hain't he sold yer nothin' yet?"

"Yet?"

"Well, 'tis kinder previous, seein' as how th' ink hain't dry on yer sig. Say, I tell you he's a rustler from Rustle-ville — buys an' sells more goods than —"

"Goods? I understood him to say that he was a mining broker."

"Yes'm. That's th' kind o' goods he carries. Oro Grande is his lay now."

"Is there much excitement here over mines?"

"Right smart. Everybody bucks th' game more or less. Want a pitcher o' water, ma'am?"

"Not now; but you may bring me my hand-bag."

The boy fumbled among a pile of baggage, and finally brought forth the desired article.

"What's the matter with your eyes? Your vision seems to be seriously impaired," she said with as much sympathy in her voice as she would have shown in pricing a piece of dry goods.

"Grannerlations, ma'am. You see I can't see so dead good as I might, though Dr. Eisler says he thinks I'm better than I used ter be. Th' Colonel got me in here on the night shift."

"What is your name?" she queried.

"Dick Pickens. Some calls me Dick, others calls me Pick. Col. Ferguson calls me Picky, but then me an' him is old chums. I bunks down at his office when I'm out o' a job. Say, ma'am, there hain't none smarter 'n

him when it comes to a big propersition in mines — bar none."

"What do you mean by a 'propersition'?"

"Don't yer know what a propersition is? A propersition is a — well, I know but I can't jes think. Th' Colonel'll tell yer th' first time he meets up with you; an' he'll give it to yer straight, too."

"Now, Dickens —"

"Pickens, yer mean."

"Well, Pickens then. You may get me some water."

"Yes'm. Hot or cold?"

For a half-hour Mrs. Boylston kept Pickens busy in waiting upon her, and when at last he got back to his post (a cane-seated chair in one corner of the office) he found Colonel Ferguson absorbed in a newspaper and pulling at a cigar. Presently he laid down the paper, moved over by the side of Pickens, and gently laid his hand upon the little fellow's shoulder. Pickens looked up and smiled, and, grasping the hand, patted it affectionately.

"How much did she give you fer all that waitin' on her?" asked the Colonel.

"Five coppers," answered Pickens.

"Well, Picky, you mustn't mind her ways. She's a Yankee, an' lives next-door neighbor to th' Almighty Dollar. Here's two bits. When you git off duty, go buy a cream an' soda."

Pickens took the money and thanked his old friend by an appreciative "Oh, say, now!" which was as near as he ever got to declining one of the Colonel's numerous gifts.

"Picky, my boy," laughed the Colonel, laying his hand again caressingly upon the lad's shoulder, "we was too previous. Recollect, son, never to knock yourself down to a woman jest in from a long trip, an' tired an' hungry as a coyote."

"I didn't," mildly protested Pickens.

"No; but I did, an' I'd oughter knowed better."

"She don't hold it up agin yer, I guess. She's dead struck on th' handle to your name."

"Is she? But, Picky, it wasn't on th' card."

"Nope. That's what she said; but I give it away."

"No, did you? Say, don't you think you could stand another soda? What?" And the Colonel laughed, and shoved another quarter into the boy's hand.

"Colonel, that woman can mighty nigh give yer cards an' spades on big words. That's what she can," observed Pickens.

"Well, if she can, she's an aurif'rous artist. What?" said the Colonel, laughing lightly.

"How did yer get to be a colonel, anyhow?" asked the boy, wishing to satisfy a consuming curiosity.

"Well, sir," said the Colonel, "it was jest like this: When Ferguson was in th' real-estate business big, down at Smelter City, he had more or less money to burn — rode at the head of th' percession. One day a newspaper feller come along an' give him a double-column write-up with a forty-dollar wood cut at th' head of it, an' under th' picture was 'COLONEL GOLDEN SILVERS FERGUSON' in great big black letters; an' Picky, between me an' you, I've never since been able to rub it out, though I've got so I don't give a continental dam."

The Colonel's big words and forceful ways—a goodness of heart making ample amends for roughness of speech—always filled Pickens with admiration.

“Seen Joe, lately?” asked the Colonel.

“Mister Wildman? No, sir,” answered Pickens.

“Glad to hear you say *Mister*. Perliteness don't cost nothin' but breath, an' it's breath out at int'rest, an' int'rest is what makes men grow rich, an' rich men rule th' roost. That's right!”

CHAPTER IV.

A MEETING.

REGINALD DELANCEY came to Cameo Springs shortly before Agnes Hargrave and her aunt. The burdens of an aimless existence seemed rather heavy for one of his years. He wore cool-looking flannels; and, though not better looking than some of the waiters at the hotels, his hands were whiter. A well-cultivated disdain of "trades people" attested the fact of his having come of a long line of them.

DeLancey and Agnes soon met. It seems that Aunt Rebecca was first introduced to him by Mrs. Boylston — with whom she had already become acquainted — who knew his parents in Boston, and when she mentioned their great wealth, his respectability was at once taken for granted by Aunt Rebecca. It is possible also that she mistook the fellow's lack of humor for piety. At any rate, she hastened to present him to her niece, on which occasion he invited Agnes to go with him to see the cañon, a fine bit of natural scenery not many miles away.

"It will help — aw — to kill time," he remarked with a tired drawl that is epidemic in certain city clubs where young men of much leisure and little ambition meet to commiserate one another on the folly of earthly existence.

"Why, time here doesn't drag with me," she said with enthusiasm; "there is so much to see — such lovely views, such wonderful tints in the coloring of the grand old mountains."

"It will be a gweat bore after you've been here as — aw — long as I have been. Don't you know, I was weally tired of the beastly place before I'd been here two days. It may be different now, since I've met *you*."

Agnes blushed, and DeLancey went on: "Weally, there's so little to amuse a fellow out here. 'Tis dweadfully lonesome, don't you know. Now, at the seashore —"

He then pictured life at Newport when the season is on, and Agnes felt that perhaps she had been premature with her enthusiasms for Colorado. "Really, how little I have seen of the world, and how nice it must be to be rich and go to a new place every summer, and to wear diamonds," she thought.

DeLancey invited Aunt Rebecca to go with them on the drive, but upon her excusing herself the invitation was not pressed.

The afternoon came, and with it DeLancey and the finest turnout obtainable — spirited horses, nickel-plated harness, and bright, jingling chains. Agnes was in exuberant spirits. The sky was cloudless, the air bracing.

As the young couple drove away from the hotel, Aunt Rebecca smiled approvingly, and DeLancey wore the air of a fellow well pleased with his surroundings; and well he might feel proud of such a beautiful companion, for her figure was well rounded, and her face seemed to melt into her chin and her chin into her throat in graceful lines of beauty.

It being their first visit to the great cañon, there were many exclamations of astonishment and delight. DeLancey, however, found opportunity to ply his old art of flattery, though he soon abandoned it, and cast about for

more powerful means of ingratiating himself. He gathered armfuls of the beautiful wild columbines (Colorado's State flower) and presented them with such complimentary allusions as young men are wont to make when conditions are favorable.

Without raising her eyes to his, Agnes said:

"Someone has said, 'The wonder and the bloom of the world is God's free gift to man.' I never realized before coming here and seeing these mountains with their great abundance what a great gift it is."

For awhile they drove on in silence, DeLancey in doubt as to whether he had scored.

Presently they reached the cañon,

"Where glooms the light, as through cathedral aisles,
Where flash and fall bright waters, pure as air,
Where wild birds brood, wild blossoms bloom, and where
The winds sing anthems through the darkling trees."

And there, amidst the grandest scenery imaginable, nailed to a pine tree was this sign:

SEE FERGUSON FOR GOLD MINES.

"What a shame so to disfigure the beauty of nature!" exclaimed Agnes.

"Do you know Ferguson?" asked DeLancey.

"He was on the sleeper, and I've seen him often about the hotel. I like to watch him. He is such a study."

"There, at least, is a man who has attracted her attention," thought DeLancey.

Approaching the hotel, Agnes showed her appreciation of the drive by an artless joyousness—ever a sufficient recompense to a susceptible fellow—and a smile which alone was enough to cause him to ask her to go with him again on the morrow. They found Aunt Rebecca and Mrs. Boylston resting in the easy-chairs on the veranda, and there were certain gracious smiles as they went into ecstasies, presumably over the flowers brought to them, for they adored flowers next to—riches.

Agnes and her aunt soon left Mrs. Boylston, and the latter was then approached by the man whose card she had received on the evening of her arrival.

“Ahem!” said he, clearing his throat and removing a half-consumed cigar from his lips, “My name is Ferguson—Ferguson of Colorado. Mines an’ syndicates a speciality—insurance on th’ side. Temp’rary quarters next ter postoffice. No telephone yet—too busy ter put one in. Glad ter have you drop in. Ladies always welcome. Magnificent collection of samples—rich an’ rare—from all th’ leadin’ propersitions of th’ greatest gold camp on earth, Oro Grande. Your name is—?”

“Boylston, sir.”

“Of course, *Miss* Boylston, of—”

“*Mistress* Boylston, if you please, sir.”

“Gosh, is that so? Married ladies do git ter look so bloomin’ an’ girlish out here. Great climate, ma’am. In fact, it’s immense. Simply immense.”

Mrs. Boylston made no reply.

“Remember a-hearin’ Picky speak of your generosity. Picky isn’t so overwhelmin’ bright; but say, he’s all-

wool-an'-a-yard-wide. Don't you think so? Picky, you know, is th' bell-boy here."

"I think he may be one of those rare individuals who improve on acquaintance *somewhat*," she said with a qualifying emphasis on the last word.

"That's right, ma'am; he does. And that's purty much th' way it is with all of us old-timers. We're good mixers. Sometimes a stuck-up Easterner thinks we're a trifle previous; but you see we've jest got ter everlastin'ly hustle, an' so we git in th' habit of cuttin' corners. Good-hearted, though. Must admit that?"

Mrs. Boylston nodded a languid assent.

"Always feel acquainted with you Bostoners. Down there once. Took a flyer in Back Bay dirt. Made good money, too. But, pshaw! Boston never had no boom ter some. Say, Chicago was great. Bet your sweet life. Ever there?"

Mrs. Boylston shook her head, and picked up a magazine and began to turn its leaves, a movement that did not escape the eagle eye of her visitor, who moved restlessly, glanced at his watch, and felt that he must get down to business.

"Talk about booms," said he, "there never was no boom in it with what we're a-goin' ter have dead sure up at Oro Grande. That's straight! Nobody knows more 'bout booms, I reckon, than yours truly. Seen 'em all. Got nipped in most of 'em."

Mrs. Boylston here laid down her magazine, and the Colonel, thus encouraged, drew up a chair and settled himself in it.

"Col. Ferguson," she began.

"Leave off th' 'Colonel,' if you'd jest as soon. It's only a frill. My best friends call me 'Goldy.' But it's all th' same in Dutch. Now, ma'am, what was you a-goin' ter ask?" And he struck a match after having asked whether smoking was offensive.

"I was about to ask, Colonel —"

"Bound ter do th' perlite, I see; but no matter — Ferguson's used ter it."

—"whether there are no poor mines in Oro Grande?" Her eye had caught the sparkle of a pin on the Colonel's ample shirt-front, a diamond whose size and brilliancy threw in the shade any of her own, and she was more gracious.

"Very few, ma'am. Very few! Mines air a good deal like bicycles — every one is advertised as th' best. Fact is, all air good — all safeties. They're a good deal like th' Texan said of whiskies, some may be better 'n others, but all air good. All you have got ter do is ter dip in an' git one. Jump in with both feet — join th' percession — keep step ter th' music — an' you'll have more fun 'n you ever had in all your life," urged the Colonel glibly, punctuating his words with an occasional thump of his cane.

"But, Col. Ferguson, one would not want a mine just for the exhilaration of it," she suggested.

"Exactly. Me an' you air too old — that is, Ferguson is" (it was a habit of his often to speak of himself in the third person) — "to join in a frolic jest for th' mere fun of it. Now, as I was about to say, 'Business before Pleasure' is Ferguson's motto. Th' great beauty of a gold mine — a *gold* mine, mark you — is that you get 'em both, biz *an'*

pleasure. Business in clippin' coupons an' pleasure in a-thinkin' how much more you 're going' ter git next pay-day. *Sabe?*"

"But are there no risks?"

"Certain. Never got on th' cars that you didn't take chances, did you? An' you never got hurt, did you? Well, it's like that with mines—gold mines. Once in a while some greeny puts his wad in a hole in th' ground without takin' proper advice an' he gits what he needs—experience!"

Mrs. Boylston smiled faintly. Whenever Ferguson got a prospective customer to smile he felt that the battle was half won. He, himself, was generally all smiles, and the exuberancy of his good spirits was apt to prove contagious.

"Say, how'd you like ter take a run up ter Oro Grande some of these fine days? Great trip!"

She made no reply, and the Colonel, taking a fresh light for his cigar, resumed:

"By th' way, who's that bloomin' dude from your town that's a-shinin' up ter that blonde girl with th' old-maid aunt? Gosh, hain't she purty? I mean th' girl. Has he got th' stuff—th' spondulicks?"

"Mr. DeLancey? Oh, he is a fine fellow. His father is a banker, and Miss Hargrave would do well to capture him, though I fear she is a little too late."

"Can't tell nothin' 'bout that. Mebbe *he's* too late, fer a good-lookin' Western girl is mighty apt to be spoke fer early. Mines an' maidens air in strong demand out here, ma'am. Fact!"

"Indeed?"

"Yes, indeed. Why, say, I've seen one of your ordi-

nary-lookin' Yankee girls come out here an' git lariat-ed fer life before she knowed th' dif. betwixt th' Peak an' th' Cone.—But, ter come back ter business, if you think mines is too chancey—if you don't feel like puttin' in one dollar fer th' sake of takin' out fifty next month—if you want a real gilt-edged, permanent investment, I'd like ter tell you sometime 'bout a great scheme I have fer life insurance. Bound ter be a winner. Can't help it. It's a brand-new plan of mine fer a new kind of insurance company. Call it, say, 'The Woman's Universal Favorite Company,' an' have a form of life policy that 'ud beat th' band, called th' 'Non-committal, Fifty-year Life.' No lady 'ud have ter tell her age—agents 'ud be strictly ferbid askin' questions on that head. You could guess that such a company 'ud soon have money ter burn. That's right. But that's somethin' that'll keep. Take it up later."

The Colonel here stated that he had an engagement to meet a syndicate of capitalists at his office, renewed his invitation to call, and hurried away.

The printed circular which he dropped—casually, of course—at Mrs. Boylston's feet, and which she, being a woman, at once picked up and read, ran as follows:

GREAT GOBS OF GOLD!

Keep your eagle eye on Oro Grande. Many men will get very immensely rich up there, and

DON'T YOU FORGET IT.

Many apparently poor prospects will make many people mighty glad.

NOW

Is the accepted time. To-day, not to-morrow. Get in the band-wagon.

BEWARE

Of the fakir and the shark who will get in their fine work on

hosts of suckers. They are organized auriferous swindlers. That's right. We have no sympathy for the fellow who is fool enough to buy of them when there is

A PERFECTLY SAFE WAY.

He should go to an experienced and reliable broker (such as the undersigned) and get straight tips.

COMMON SENSE

Is the most uncommon thing there is. *Sabe?*

GOLDEN S. FERGUSON.

CHAPTER V.

PRINCIPALLY ABOUT PEARLS.

COL. FERGUSON went direct to his office, where he met his friend Joe Wildman.

"What luck?" asked the Colonel brusquely.

"Poor enough," replied Wildman.

"No nibbles?"

"Saw an *It* down at the Clifton."

"What name?"

"DeLancey — pronounced as if he had the *law* all on his side — DeLawncey."

"Dough?"

"Don't know as to that. Possibly."

Wildman then went on to describe the young man while the Colonel with elevated feet blew puffs of smoke with such gentle exhalations as to cause blue rings to curl upward, like those made by a locomotive on a frosty morning, and as they widened he sent others up through them, — a trick at which he was quite proficient.

"He's a banker's son. Joe," said the Colonel, thoughtfully and puffing away.

"Yes," responded Wildman in a tone indicating attention.

"There's two kinds of fool. Th' nat'ral-born one, who hasn't got a thinker wuth mentionin', an' is as harmless as a blacksnake; an' th' dashed fool whose thinker goes off half-cocked, an' so he b'lieves he knows more'n everybody an' God. When that kind bets on his jedgment, if

he wins out it's a scratch. That's th' kind DeLancey is. If I was as smart as he thinks he is I'd syndicate myself. Hoss sense, Joe, is a great blessin'. There's as much in knowin' when ter let go as in knowin' when ter ketch hold, if not more. Any fool with money can ketch hold."

Wildman smiled his assent, and the Colonel proceeded:

"How'd it do ter try that Smelter City remnant No. 13, on him? Reckon it's jest a question of which has th' most attractive lay-out, me or th' Minnehaha—result all th' same ter dude. He's got ter have experience, an' he'll have ter pay for it in Colorado, whether he buys my stuff or their poker. What?"

"Let's see, what is No. 13? I don't just—"

"Why, it's th' Great Platte Precious Pearl Producin' Project. Used ter call it th' big five P's." And the Colonel reached up to a shelf, brought down a book, and read:

SNAP NO. 13.

Owner represents as follows, to wit: I reside in Nebraska; have made much scientific research in natural history and its kindred branches; have an original idea for utilizing the rusty-looking fresh-water clam as a producer of the precious pearl of commerce. This I propose to accomplish by inserting within the pearl-excreting tissues a small fragment of foreign matter around which the pearl is naturally deposited. Although of rude form and repulsive exterior, some varieties of the clam have shell interiors of marvelous beauty. I have developed a number of fine specimens of pearls from deposits around grains of sand that were forced into the shell of the clam. My invention consists in a process for artificially inserting into a clam-shell foreign substances which will promote a rapid deposit of pearly matter. The aforesaid pearls may be given any desired color or tint by using for the nucleus brilliant glass beads of small size, the semi-transparent nature of the pearl allowing the color to diffuse through the milky deposit. I have an ideal site for a manufactory or plant in a slough which adjoins my house.

Might be induced to part with a small interest in my discovery (also in farm).

Price and terms made known upon application to my sole and exclusive agent, GOLDEN S. FERGUSON.

"When the Colonel had finished reading, Wildman smilingly said, "Rather gauzy, isn't it?"

"Not a bit! Not a little bit!" cried the Colonel with a fine paroxysm of enthusiasm; for, though sometimes he spoke lightly of his great schemes, the moment one was assailed he was up in arms.

"It may sound a trifle thinnish at first blush," he went on, "but I tell you, Joe, she's liable ter turn out ter be a big winner. Folks always laugh at a man an' call him a fool till he makes a *go*. Then what? They come round sheepish an' kick 'cause they didn't have sense enough ter git in on th' ground floor. Look at th' harnessin' of Niagry Falls! Look at th' telephone! Why, when I was a kid a feller who'd a-talked 'bout such things bein' possible 'ud 'a' been sent ter th' lunatic asylum quicker 'n hell could scorch a feather!"

Wildman smiled, and the Colonel went on:

"Well, anyhow, you must admit that 'Nothin' ventured, nothin' gained' is a devilish good business motto, especially when you can git th' other feller to do th' venturin', an' you can git a rake-off in th' shape of a big commish."

Wildman nodded an assent, and the Colonel closed with—

"So, you just meet up with that youthful youngster from th' bean-eatin' paradise an' feel of him. Smooth his bangs. Have him come in here an' read what th' owner himself admits about th' lay-out, an' if he don't

regard it as *the* chance of his life after I've explained its *modus operandus* —"

"*Operandi*," corrected Wildman.

"No matter; I always use th' word in th' plural," explained the Colonel; adding, "If he don't want ter invest, there's no great damage done."

The next day Wildman reported that he had seen DeLancey, and the Colonel with some eagerness asked,

"Think we can lasso him?"

"I thought at first I had a cinch on him, but when I told him to ask you to let him see No. 13, he said that that settled it, for he could not think of considering an investment having such an unlucky number."

"Superstitious, hey?" said the Colonel, reaching for the book. "Well, we'll just transfigger it an' make it No. 31. Next time you see th' gent you can tell him th' goods is marked 31 instead of 13. *Sabe?*"

Then the Colonel began to sing:

"O, Colorado is the place for me;
The further you go, the more you see;
Whisky is plenty, and water is free,
In Colorado."

"Goldy, where did you get that?" asked Wildman.

"That's no hand-me-down. That's made ter order fer me by — myself," remarked the Colonel.

"I didn't know that you ever wrote poetry," said Wildman.

"Lord, yes. Used ter do th' rhyme act on th' *Tallow Dip* before she sputtered out; that is, when th' comps run short of copy, I spaced out with po'try. 'Tain't no trick ter write po'try when you once git onto it, an' have a good stub pen," observed the Colonel.

"No?" queried Wildman, repressing a smile.

"No, sir. Talk 'bout inspiration — stuff an' nonsense! Nothin' of th' sort! It's lots easier ter ride a pegasus than a bronco. Why, Picky, who used ter be devil in our shop, got so he could grind it out. Of course, th' foreman 'ud make his lines fit th' stick,—but then," solemnly admitted the Colonel, "he did that on *mine* too."

As Wildman left, the Colonel asked him if he would be going by "Solomon's Place," and upon his answering that he would, the Colonel said:

"I wish you'd take this here kohinoor of mine an' soak it hard. Git a couple of hundred on it fer ten days. I've \$100 ter pay to-morrow on an old promissory."

Wildman took the pin which the Colonel unfastened from his shirt-front, and soon it was duly ticketed at the pawnbroker's.

The next day was a flush time with the Colonel, and he asked Wildman to look after his office for a few days while he should be in Denver seeing how a "certain party" was getting on.

"What's her name?" asked Wildman, teasingly.

"You ask me no questions an' I'll tell you no lies," answered the Colonel; and Wildman knew better than to persist.

CHAPTER VI.

A COLORADO DIAMOND.

ONE day Mrs. Boylston confided to Aunt Rebecca that DeLancey was engaged to Miss Madge Bardsley, of Boston; and, reciprocating, Aunt Rebecca told of her niece's engagement to Robert Morton. Both felt better after that, for they believed that they had cemented a closer friendship.

Aunt Rebecca did not rest until she had hunted up Agnes and imparted to her the news of DeLancey's engagement, and Mrs. Boylston bestirred herself promptly to notify DeLancey of what she had learned. Pray do not blame them: some secrets are too momentous for even a woman to keep.

The effect upon DeLancey was to convince him that he had lost something which he had fancied was easily within his grasp whenever he should reach out his hand for it. His covetous nature now asserted itself. Does not a man always want what he feels is quite out of his reach?

DeLancey reasoned with himself; that is, he did so far as that process was possible. With him reasoning was scarcely more than a contemplation of the power of money. Being unable to arrive at any satisfactory solution of the problem in hand, he sauntered off to the Minnehaha, where he indulged in a drink, which, should it not make clearer his thoughts, would at least dull his sensibilities.

When Agnes learned of DeLancey's engagement she inquired of her aunt as to the young woman's accomplishments, but that worthy was able only to say that the girl in question was a banker's daughter, and left her niece to draw any inference she might from that naked statement of fact. Though herself not aware of it, Aunt Rebecca bowed down to wealth; but many poor people do that.

A few evenings later there was the usual "flood of soft light" streaming through the open windows of the hotel, and DeLancey and Agnes were dancing together to the measured and melodious strains of the orchestra. They attracted much attention, or perhaps it was she who did. Dressed in a simple and becoming pink gown, and with the flush of health in her cheeks, she certainly was enchanting and radiantly beautiful that mild summer night. Her companion, observing her unusual joyousness, congratulated himself; for, having a full share of man's conceit, he felt that in a large measure he was the cause of it.

Between waltzes the young couple went out upon the broad veranda, where they chanced to pass by Aunt Rebecca and Mrs. Boylston, whose sense of Christian duty did not permit them to go nearer the ball-room than the open windows, where they could enjoy the music without being guilty of the sin of being seen in attendance upon an affair which each stood ready to condemn. These amiable ladies quickly observed the seemingly tender way in which Agnes leaned upon the arm of her escort, and then, as women sometimes will, they fell to discussing the situation. Neither of them had any doubt that there was

a reciprocal infatuation between the maiden and the young man. As to engagements that might be broken, they saw no reason to express a regret.

Now, while the two elderly ladies were fixing details to their own liking, DeLancey and Agnes were having a conversation off in a shaded nook where the babbling of a brook and the odor of pines drifted up to them in a moonlight so clear that it filtered through the leaves of the overhanging chokecherry trees and flecked the sandy and winding paths: so clear, indeed, was the light that the towering and majestic head of the great old monarch of the mountains to the west, though many miles away, seemed but a step.

In such an air and amid such surroundings it would be strange if a winsome and light-hearted girl should not be the recipient of compliments well calculated to turn her head. However firm her resolve to be true to her lover, how easy it is for a girl to appease the qualms of conscience by the seductive sophistry that a flirtation is a jolly and harmless thing! And so, while DeLancey showered his praises upon her, Agnes found herself reasoning thus: "Pshaw! why not have a good time? DeLancey is a flirt. Why not lead him on? With the closing of the season he will go back to his home and forget me, and I will return to Robert, who will be none the wiser,"—a most dangerous though not uncommon philosophy.

And so after a while DeLancey took her hand and even went so far as to declare himself, and before she fully realized it he had slipped a ring on her finger. Hastily

withdrawing her hand she tried to give back the ring, but he pleaded with her to keep it, and — she did.

After the ball was over and Agnes had returned to her room, she found a letter from Morton awaiting her,— a letter sufficiently tender to meet the requirements of any reasonable mind, but it did not say that her presence was indispensable to his happiness, and — but she was in a fault-finding mood, as persons who wish to justify doubtful conduct of their own are apt to be. She recalled the events of the evening, and looked again at the ring: it was certainly a beauty. She turned it in many ways to catch the brilliancy of its scintillations, and felt a certain pleasure in its possession. Then she re-read her lover's letter, and repeated the operation again and again till with sobs and kisses over it she fell asleep, perchance to dream of Morton, or — who knows? — of DeLancey.

What a sweet relief to the daily sorrows and perplexities of a woman's life are tears and sleep!

Agnes made up her mind to return the ring the next time she should meet DeLancey. She did not have long to wait, for he soon called with a carriage and invited her to go with him. During the drive she tried to carry out her resolution, but he treated the gift as of such trifling importance and so strenuously begged her to keep it merely as a token of friendship, that she finally reluctantly consented. She encouraged him by a lack of decisive opposition; and so she continued to receive numerous bouquets and other evidences of his regard for her.

Perhaps she felt a momentary interest in him — the interest which almost any girl feels in a man whose vices

are not wantonly distressing, and who compliments her with his attentions. But she did not love him, nor did she feel that she ever could, even were Morton out of the question. He was not bad looking, and he was a graceful dancer, and skilled in doing the many trifles which appeal to the feminine heart. And though she had heard some rumors reflecting on him, she was not prone to believe them, for, thus far, while in her presence, he had always been sober, and behaved as a gentleman should.

One afternoon, as he was coming up from the Minnehaha, at a turn in the path he suddenly met Agnes. He had been playing roulette in what he termed "deuced hard luck." She had been rather cool toward him of late, and he decided to settle matters then and there. Soon they were seated on a little bench beneath overhanging willows. There was a suggestion of mint julep and cloves on his breath which would have been more noticeable had they not been out in the open air.

"Agnes," he said, "I've met many flirts in my life, but you beat 'em all. By Jove! I can make nothing out of you. Do you know that you are—you are (hic) devilish cruel, and —"

"Stop!" she cried. "How dare you talk so to me? Did I ever tell you that I cared for you? Am I to blame for your persistent attentions?"

She would not admit that she had been at all to blame—an admission many women are slow to make. Then she added, as she rose to go:

"I was guilty of cowardice in not frankly telling you that I could not accept your gift. I'll return it. Even if I were free to accept it, I should not do so now. This

thing has gone far enough — too far!" And she trembled with emotion as she walked away.

When Agnes reached the hotel the clerk handed her a telegram, and noticing her troubled expression, he hastened to say that he hoped it should not contain any bad news.

"Oh, no. It's not that," she said confusedly.

"Suppose it frightened you just to get it. Women are queer things. I never saw one yet get a telegram who wasn't scared — always think it must have dreadful news," observed he, smiling good-naturedly as many hotel clerks do when they try to be agreeable to their guests.

The telegram was from Robert Morton, and read:

"Please meet me on arrival of Cannon-Ball to-morrow morning."

Agnes hurried to her room, and soon returned the ring to DeLancey, Pickens being the medium through which it was sent.

"Wonder if I made a fool of myself," said DeLancey not regarding the boy's presence.

"Kinder looks so," replied Pickens, feeling called upon to agree with whatever DeLancey should say.

"I didn't speak to you," snapped DeLancey, tossing the boy a dime, who thereupon hastened away.

While DeLancey was musing on the ways of Western girls, Joe Wildman came up.

"Wildman, old man, sit down here," said DeLancey. "I want your opinion in stwict confidence. You remember that ring I bought the other day at the pavilion?"

"Yes. Why?"

"Do you think a girl could detect that it was — aw —

only a Colorado quartz, or a Colorado diamond as they call it?"

"DeLancey, you don't mean to say that you gave that four-dollar stone—that base imitation of a diamond to a girl—"

"I simply asked whether you thought a girl *could* detect that it was not genuine."

"Well, no; probably not."

"That's what I thought, too."

"But only a cad would give a girl such a thing," said Wildman, looking hard at DeLancey.

"I was—er—just wondering, you know, whether a fellow *could*. But, say, old man, let's go down to the Minnehaha. I'm most devilish dry," urged DeLancey.

"Thank you. I don't drink."

"Say, old chappy," said DeLancey, putting his hand familiarly on Wildman's shoulder, "do you know that Agnes Hargrave?"

"Yes. I've met her," said Wildman, relieving himself of DeLancey's hand.

"Gweat flirt. Eh? Poor but proud?" queried DeLancey, sneeringly.

"She may be poor and proud, but those are not offenses in my eyes. I don't think that every girl who favors me with her society is a coquette. I respect womanhood, and I never suspect, sir, where I have no cause to," replied Wildman with spirit.

"What do you mean by all that, and why did you look at me in that way just then?" demanded DeLancey, drawing back.

"Because I happen to know that you gave that base imitation to Miss Hargrave, and I despise a fraud!"

At this DeLancey bristled up and showed signs of battle.

"It's no worse than for you to try to sell me that — aw — bloomin' prairie pearl business," he cried.

"I think it is. I didn't deceive you, or try to. I simply told you about it, and left it with you to satisfy yourself in regard to it as a business proposition," said Wildman quietly.

DeLancey blustered and swore and threatened, but Wildman scorned to touch him, and waited in vain for him to make the first pass. Like many another man whose aggressiveness swells in inverse ratio to his small size, DeLancey mistook his opponent's magnanimity for cowardice, and though he was vituperative and exasperating, Wildman proved himself worthy of admiration by quietly going away — conduct that often hurts such natures as DeLancey's even more than would a drubbing.

A little later DeLancey sought solace at the Minnehaha, and was soon so stupefied as to be oblivious to the monotonous whir and clatter of the little marble as it rolled round and round, now and then kissing the edges of the pockets as if coquetting with them and hesitating whether to drop its fortune into a black or red, an odd or an even, the single or the double 0. It never occurred to him that roulette is more fickle than some women, more constant than some men.

That evening DeLancey received a telegram asking him to meet Madge Bardsley next morning at the depot, and he at once went off to bed in order that he might be duly sober.

CHAPTER VII.

SOME NEW ARRIVALS.

ALTHOUGH a bequest is never inherited save upon the contingency of death, yet the beneficiary is frequently congratulated on his "good fortune," however near and dear to him the testator may have been. Thus it was, when Robert Morton's grandmother died leaving him a snug sum of money, he received no condolence, no sympathy, nothing but congratulations. True, his friends did not know her, for she had lived elsewhere; but it seemed to him that they might have indulged the presumption of an affectionate regard on his part.

The money thus acquired enabled Morton to cause a certain contemplated cottage to assume a tangible shape, and, business not being in a condition to suffer from his absence, to take a vacation; that he thought of spending it elsewhere than in Colorado, is not to be supposed for a moment.

So it came to pass that, one hot August day, Morton was a passenger on a west-bound train that whirled along through an ocean of corn-fields and across billowy prairies that rose and fell in gentle undulations, decreasing and ever decreasing till they feathered out at last into that broad and nearly level expanse formerly known as "The Plains" or "Buffalo Land."

On his way west Morton met in the Pullman a stylish young lady who with her chaperon was *en route* from Boston. He soon became acquainted with her in that easy

way which a Western man has of approaching and affiliating with strangers.

The impressions which Morton obtained of Miss Bardsley — for it was she — may be here set down as those of an unprejudiced observer. Complexion, ivory-like in its clarity; large eyes with a depth of meaning only to be guessed at; a figure well rounded in its outlines; lips that parted slightly, disclosing even teeth of pearly whiteness; a charming eagerness in her questions, yet a deference for the opinions of others that made conversation with her a delight; intonations of voice that pleased the ear as would some simple melody, and a ripple of mirthfulness that played with her words and animated her expression.

As for her chaperon, she was a middle-aged, commonplace body, whose owliness was enhanced by glasses leveled at a book of more or less absorbing interest.

In obedience to their telegrams, Morton and Miss Bardsley were met at the station by DeLancey and Agnes, — a rather embarrassing situation for them, — and soon the whole party was in a carryall and being whisked along toward the hotel.

Presently a horseman, whose broad, light-colored sombrero swayed up and down with the regularity of an eagle's wings in upward flight, dashed by. DeLancey remarked to Miss Bardsley, "There goes a cowboy;" and the latter found her eyes following the disappearing form.

"Are all cowboys as handsome as he?" asked she, naïvely.

"I don't see anything handsome — aw — about him. His name is Wildman, and he owns a ranch out here in the foothills somewhere, I believe. I've no use for him,"

said DeLancey, recalling his recent experience with Wildman.

"And who is that young woman there in the fine clothes with the children and the donkey?"

"Burro, you mean. Why, her name is Clarisse Montchaveux, a new arrival. She's an only child, so they say, of an old chap worth his millions. I believe they call him a senator."

The ink which Morton spread on the hotel register was not yet dry when a dapper man with a genial smile stepped up and presented his card.

"Mr. Morton," he began with a jaunty self-assertion, "I am Ferguson, formerly of Smelter City. Real estate there, minin' propersitions here—gold perducers a speciality. Call in, sir, an' see me when you git time, an' don't percrastinate. I've somethin' fine ter show you—somethin' finer 'n silk!"

"What?" asked Morton, abruptly.

"Specimens, sir, from Oro Grande, th' greatest minin' camp on earth, bar none!"

"Well, what of it?"

"I'd like ter int'rest you in a little property—rare chance jest now; in fact, bulliest chance ever was. Fact!"

"I guess you didn't notice where I registered from," smiled Morton.

"Oh, yes, I did. You can bet your boots I did. You're from bleedin' old Kansas, an' I know her like a book. Got this limp of mine down there—rushed in where an angel wouldn't trod, an' tried ter stop a gent from robbin' a bank, an' got an ounce of lead ter remember him by; also got caught in one of your cyclones once, but that

wasn't so bad as th' swat I got in th' Wichita boom—dropped \$87,500 there an' two months' time an' board at th' Carey hotel. But I don't lay up nothin' agin Kansas. She's all hunky, though some folks do git terrible down on her. Bully good State; don't you think so?"

"Of course, as a loyal son, I agree with you quite; but one of our distinguished senators has said of her that she is a land of extremes,—the hottest, coldest, wettest, driest, thickest, thinnest country in the world."

"Mebbe she is, but I like her, 'cause somethin' is always a-tryin' ter happen down there. No flies on her! She may git off now an' then, but she always gits back on in great shape. She ketches ev'ry crank disease there is, but she gits over it, an' bobs up an' cracks her heels jest as if nothin' had happened. There's one thing I've always noticed 'bout you Jayhawkers. You go away, an' damn her ter her back, but you always sneak back to her an' kiss an' make up. Fact!"

"You're right there, Mr. Ferguson. But you wouldn't expect a fellow from that land of collapsed booms to go into any speculation, would you?"

"Not, Mr. Morton, if by speculation you mean a mere two-by-four scheme without no big, *genuine*, simon-pure merit. Not by a long shot."

"He isn't apt these times to have any money for even things of great merit, I fear, Mr. Ferguson."

"Hush! I'm onto his situation dead. But th' thing I wish ter call ter your attention is no gold-brick racket, an' it don't take scads. Can git in now down on th' ground floor, right next ter th' cellar."

"I've been in on the ground floor before, Mr. Fergu-

son, and I have a strong impression that I never got above that floor," said Morton, laughing mildly, in which he was joined by the jovial colonel, who nevertheless protested that "velvet is velvet, an' is good ter touch."

Morton then related some of his experiences in real-estate speculations, and was surprised to find that he did not mention a town with which his new acquaintance was not familiar and in which he had not also had an experience.

"Yes, siree! By gad, them was boss times, an' I guess Ferguson was in th' corner-lot craze 'bout as much as th' next feller. He was in Wichita, an' Birmin'ham, an' Galveston, an' Spokane, an' San Diego, an' Ogden, an' purty much all th' rest of th' bloomin' burgs in their flourishin' an' palmy days. An' Morton, I'll tell you somethin' on th' square: after it was all over, Ferguson stood on th' bridge at midnight at Smelter City tryin' ter persuade himself ter take th' final leap into that durned old muddy Arkansaw, when a feller come up an' tapped him on th' shoulder an' said, 'Stranger, do you happen to know a feller named Ferguson?' 'Used ter be on speakin' terms with him,' says I. 'I wish'd I could find him,' says he, 'fer I've got somethin' great that I'd like ter git up a syndicate to handle, an' they say he's h—l on syndicates!' Then he told me 'bout Oro Grande, an' I reckon Ferguson owes his life ter that chap. Fact!"

Morton smiled, and the Colonel proceeded:

"Say, real estate isn't in it with mines. It's mines—*gold* mines, Morton, where th' big money is. Between man an' man, there hain't no flies on gold. Got an engagement now to meet a syndicate of cap'talists at my

office, an' must go. Run in an' see me. Make yourself at home, an' if you don't see what you want jest ask fer it."

"Thank you."

"There's a good place ter write, an' daily papers, an' a box of cigars, an' you won't be bored ter death whether you buy or don't. Well, glad to've met you. It's like meetin' an old friend. So long. See you anon!" And, snapping the lid of his watch a third and last time, he walked briskly down the street, twirling his cane and whistling lightly to himself.

That evening DeLancey took a walk with Mrs. Boylston. He seemed to be in a troubled condition of mind, and wished to confide in some one; and so Mrs. Boylston soon had the story of his rejection by Agnes Hargrave. But Mrs. Boylston professed to believe that no young woman in her right mind could really have refused such a fine young man, and after she had heard him through she said:

"Pshaw! Why did she wear that diamond ring if she did not really care for you?"

"I don't know. Twuly, I do not," he protested.

"Nonsense! She loves you; anyone can see that. But perhaps she's in a quandary as to what to do with Morton."

"Think so?"

"She wouldn't look for your attentions as she has if she didn't intend finally to accept you; and I, being a woman, can see that she only tolerates Morton."

"But what shall I do? Do tell me."

"Write to her. Tell her that you'll soon be going away and may never see her again, and that you wish to

part as friends. That will appeal to her sympathy—that fetches most any woman. Then, when you meet her, don't speak slightingly of her former lover, or ask her to break her engagement at once, but tell her you'll wait. A woman likes the man who says he will wait forever for her: she may not believe him, but she can't help admiring him for his—but, really, I ought not to interfere in such a matter, I—”

“Oh, I assure you, Mrs. Boylston, you're not at all. Twuly you're not. But here comes some one. Shall we go back to the hotel?” And offering his arm, he escorted her; and doubtless she felt the satisfaction which a woman ever feels who has given a man the benefit of her opinion on a matter of the heart.

Col. Ferguson, arrayed in a brown sack coat with velvet collar, a polka-dot vest, light-colored trousers, and tan shoes, then seated himself by her side.

“Air you perfectly happy this ev'nin', ma'am?” he asked, lighting by permission a fresh cigar.

“Happy? There's no such thing as perfect happiness in this world, is there, Colonel?” she returned, Yankee-fashion.

“Mebbe not; but then we can make a stiff bluff at it. Hey?” he smiled, blowing a cloud of smoke into the thin air.

“A bluff?”

“Yes'm, a b-l-u-f.” He spelt the word slowly and with all confidence in his ability.

Mrs. Boylston smiled; and thus encouraged, the Colonel ran on:

“You see, ma'am, happiness is only jest th' way you

look at things. If things don't jest come ter your way of wishin', an' you lay down in th' harness, you're bound ter be unhappy. Now, Ferguson believes with th' poet, that

'There's nothing so tough but what might be tougher;
If you don't hold the cards, wade in an' bluff her.'"

"I must say, Colonel, that you are quite a philosopher," said she, amusedly.

"Nothin' of th' sort, ma'am. Only jest b'lieve that life hain't no dif'rent from poker."

"Col. Ferguson, do you play that wicked game?" interrupted Aunt Rebecca, who had just taken a seat near by.

"Can't say that I do, but I play *at* it. Would you like ter set with me in a little friendly game, ma'am?"

"Mercy! I never played a game in my life," said Aunt Rebecca with some indignation.

"Yes, I know. I've met that kind before, an' they're a mighty lucky set as a rule," laughed the Colonel.

"I think that cards is a wicked waste of time," said Aunt Rebecca, reprovingly.

"Mean casino, don't you?" inquired the Colonel, innocently.

"I mean all kinds, sir."

"You do?"

"I certainly do."

"Well, if that's honest Injun, you'd better not begin. It costs a thousand dollars ter learn a good game, an' I don't reckon you'd care ter blow in that much, even if you waived th' wicked part of it. Hey?"

"I never compromise with my convictions, sir."

"When it comes down ter a matter of compromise, I

treat my convictions jest as I do my creditors—fifty cents on th' dollar, an' I never have no trouble in a-gittin' along."

"But right is right, sir."

"An' wrong is wrong, ma'am. That's right! Understand me, Ferguson don't advocate no one a-playin' a scrouge game. But a quiet little game among friends, you know, isn't so bad, is it?"

"I'm opposed to it on principle. It leads to gambling, and gambling is a most terrible vice."

"Is it? Never heard no one call it *that* before."

"You never heard gambling called a vice?"

"May have heard it called a vice, but never a '*most terrible* vice. Jest thought 'twas a common, ev'ry-day sort of thing. If it's as bad as you say it is—an' I reckon you know—I'll saw off on it short," said the Colonel with a show of earnestness; and adding, "Say, ma'am, how air you on dancin'?"

"Well, of course, I do not give it my approval at all; but I can't say that I see any harm, if young folks *will* dance, in older people looking on from a distance." She was not sure that he had not seen her one evening looking through the open windows from the veranda while a dance was in progress in the dining-room of the hotel.

"That's like goin' ter th' circus with th' children in order that they shan't miss seein' th' menagerie, hain't it?" asked the Colonel.

Aunt Rebecca ignored the question by asking the Colonel if he was at the dance of the evening before.

"Only from a safe distance, ma'am. Stood behind your chair fer awhile, an' looked in. Never saw such a

sight. I like an old-fashioned, heel-an'-toe, alaman'-left, swing-yer-pardner affair, but this here hold-me-fast-an'-let-me-snooze-on-yer-shoulder kind — well, I'd ruther have sand in my shoes!"

CHAPTER VIII.

CONCERNING JEALOUSY AND SOAP.

WHEN Agnes received DeLancey's letter requesting a parting interview, her first impulse was to show it to Morton and explain all to him and humbly to ask his forgiveness; but, reflecting that he might not understand things, or might misconstrue them, she finally decided to answer it without telling him. To refuse DeLancey's request seemed ungenerous in her, for she recalled his many kindnesses, and in the light of her present convictions he was not, perhaps, more to blame than was she herself. And so, moved by pity, she granted his request.

It was just before this that Mrs. Boylston made it her business to tell Morton that she thought it was well that he had come to Cameo Springs when he did, for she had noticed that Agnes was apparently quite smitten with a certain young man whose name she did not then see fit to divulge.

"What do you mean?" demanded Morton, his face flushing and then turning pale.

"Oh, perhaps it was only one of those trifling affairs that so often happen among well-meaning but idle young people at every summer resort," said she.

"Miss Hargrave is not a flirt. I won't believe it, and I shan't listen to such talk," he said angrily and with an emphasis that startled her.

"Ah, Mr. Morton, I don't wish to wound your feelings — what object could I possibly have? A diamond

such as some one has worn here this summer may be put away, but, sir, not lightly — not lightly!”

Morton was experiencing for the first time the miserable passion of jealousy, and was afraid to speak lest he might say something he would regret. He thought of the matter-of-fact way in which Agnes had received the news of his good fortune, and of an indefinable something in her reception of him at the depot. How quickly jealousy puts together trifles and magnifies each suspicious circumstance till the dazed eye of the lover sees only treachery, perfidy, and guilt!

How he hated this woman for telling him! Yet, what wrong motive could she possibly have? He excused himself, and hurried away. He felt that he must be by himself — he must think.

As he was going up the shaded path that follows the sinuous windings of the little mountain stream, he saw Agnes and DeLancey, and was seized with an impulse to rush upon them. Then something told him to wait, that he should get more evidence,—the evidence of his own eyes; and so he skulked among the bushes. He felt like a fugitive from justice, but he must know — his own senses should inform him, and then he would confront her; such evidence she could not deny.

Presently they sat down on a rustic seat, and seemed to be talking in low tones, DeLancey the while punching holes in the red, sandy soil with the ferrule of his cane. Their eyes were cast down. Was he not proposing, and was she not eagerly listening? Suddenly DeLancey seized her hand, took a ring from his pocket, slipped it

on her finger, pressed her hand to his lips, and hurried away.

Agnes was so dazed that she did not see Morton till he stepped directly in front of her. Startled by his sudden appearance, she hastily clasped her right hand over the ring as if to conceal it.

"Oh, you needn't try to hide it! I saw it all," cried Morton, with flushed cheeks.

"Oh, Robert! Dear Robert! Let me tell you. I will explain it all," she sobbed.

"There's nothing to explain! You're false!"

"Robert, have you no confidence in my —"

"Give me back my ring. You may keep the other fellow's."

"I will not!"

He seized her hand, roughly pulled his engagement ring from her finger, and threw it into the stream at their feet.

"Oh, Robert! Robert, I—I—"

She had fainted.

The hotel orchestra was playing *The Artist's Life*, a pretty waltz, but music could not now soothe Morton's perturbations. He looked in for a moment at the whirl of gayety, but the levity of the dancers mocked him. How could anybody be happy? As he turned away, Mrs. Boylston called to him. He was not inclined to heed her invitation, for he was not in a mood for talking. But Mrs. Boylston was one of those not uncommon women whose assurance — self-possession, they would call it — never fails them.

"I hope," said she, "that I did no wrong in mention-

ing that little matter as I did. In such matters I try to do as I would be done by."

"I presume your motive was good, but—" he hesitated, for he somehow distrusted the woman.

With a woman's quick intuition she saw that he was not in a mood for talking, and, as she gathered a shawl about her robust shoulders preparatory to moving on, she said:

"Ah, well, my friend, there's a good deal of truth in that old saying, 'There are as good fish in the sea as ever were caught.' Here comes Madge Bardsley. You will excuse me, I know, when you can have the company of such a charming and beautiful girl. A counter-irritant is sometimes a fine remedy, Mr. Morton." And as she withdrew she smiled approvingly upon Madge.

"Well," she said to herself, "if what I have said to Madge about the lovely Mr. Morton, and the hint I have just given him, don't work, I shall miss my guess. Ah! I thought so. See! She is smiling on him. This moonlight is propitious, too — nothing like moonlight for love-making!"

DeLancey came up at this time to report to his superior officer, and a most discouraging report it was.

"Remember," said Mrs. Boylston, "that faint heart never won fair lady. I tell you it will be all right yet, my boy. Morton is already paying his attentions elsewhere." And she proceeded to tell of some of her strategic moves in his interest.

"Capital!" exclaimed DeLancey, a faint hope reviving in his breast. "You ought to have been a man, What a

general you would have made! Weally, I should never have thought of such things."

"Of course you wouldn't. A man in love can think of nothing but his love. He is about as useful as this footstool — good for nothing but to be at his loved one's feet."

"Tell me, did you ever have an affair of your own to manage?" he asked.

Mrs. Boylston drew a deep breath, and presently said:

"Yes; that is, I had one that I *mismanaged*. Since you have confided in me, I will in you, Reginald. When I was a girl I fell desperately in love with a handsome young fellow of good family and very rich. He was all devotion — just as you are to Agnes. The wedding-day was set, and I was very happy. Well, to make a long story short, I was poor, and his family objected, and so the test came. He wasn't strong enough to overcome their protests, and so kept putting off the day, until — well, it never came."

She was visibly affected, and wiped the unbidden tears from her eyes.

"I hope he was severely punished," said DeLancey, earnestly.

"He hasn't been, but he will be. Mark my words, he will be! He married a girl in society considered his equal. She is dead now. He has one heir, a daughter, and she looks so much like him that I hate her for it."

DeLancey here excused himself, and Mrs. Boylston soliloquized: "Madge Bardsley shall marry Morton, and I shall be avenged!"

The next morning DeLancey met Col. Ferguson and went over a long list of "special snaps" which the latter

had on his books, but nothing seemed to strike the young man's fancy. Finally a happy thought seemed suddenly to come to the Colonel, and he slapped his knee with a vigor that said plainly, "Strange I shouldn't have thought of this one before. It's the best one of all!" And, drawing up a chair and assuming a confidential air, he said:

"Captain DeLancey, how'd somethin' out of th' ordinary run hit you? A soap mine, fer instance?" And the Colonel handed his visitor a cigar.

"A soap mine!" exclaimed DeLancey, striking a match.

"That's right, a s-o-a-p mine! Over here in Nevada is a mountain of mineral soap—pure quill—all ready to slice into cakes an' put onto th' market—can wash th' duds of th' entire United States, Canada, an' Rhode Island without more'n scratchin' off th' tip of th' peak. There's only one drawback, an' that hain't serious when you come ter look at it right—she's not jest exactly *on* a railroad. I admit that much, but th' smart thing ter do is ter quietly buy it an' throw a forty-mile line of narrer-gauge out to her. See?"

"But railroads cost money," objected DeLancey.

"So does soap. How do you reckon th' big magazines could run without their soap ads? And how could th' soap men put up fer 'em if there wasn't big money in th' business? As I was 'bout ter say, you could form a syndicate an' sell bonds enough ter build th' road. 'T wouldn't cost much ter operate it, 'cause you could soap th' track an' let all th' out-bound traffic jest slide down ter market,—it's all down grade,—and you'd only have ter haul empties

one way. See? Then you could water th' stock of your company an' sell that, an' after awhile shut off on soap an' let th' road fall into th' hands of a receiver. Then buy her in fer a song, an' open up on soap agin. Don't take no great head ter see what money there is in such a simple scheme as that. Besides, it's more 'n likely you could git a subsidy, exemption from taxation or th' like, from th' State of Nevada, fer she's got ter hump herself or she'll be throwed back into a Territory; an' don't you see what her rich senators 'ud be willin' to put up ruther 'n have that happen? No, sir; her native soap is Nevada's salvation!"

"How much can the mountain be had for?" asked DeLancey, whose interest had now been aroused.

"That's a secret; but you jest think it over an' make me an offer by to-morrow morning," said the Colonel.

"Can't an option be had meantime?"

"Can give you an option on a half-int'rest, but you couldn't git one on th' whole fer love ner money — owner's too smart. How'd it do fer you ter put up \$500 fer a thirty-day option, balance of th' \$100,000 at th' end of that time or th' \$500 ter glimmer as a forfeit?"

"Have you any samples?"

"Yes, indeed; an' I'll give you a cake, if you'll promise not ter tell where it come from. Of course, it hain't fumigated — I mean it hain't sweet-scented, but 't will fetch th' dirt all th' samee."

With the cake of soap the Colonel gave DeLancey a chunk of soft soap, and the interview closed by the latter giving the former a check for \$500; in return for which the Colonel gave a formal written receipt, in which the terms of the agreement were specified.

CHAPTER IX.

A HOBBY, LOVE, AND DOGS.

AGNES HARGRAVE had fallen ill, and Dr. Eisler was called to attend her. In diagnosing her malady he did not look at her tongue, nor feel of her pulse, nor take her temperature, nor ask many questions, nor look impressively wise, but with painstaking care he examined her eyes. As if possessed of the power of mental photography,—some X-ray capable of searching the very mind of a patient,—he said:

“Miss Hargrave, your visual nerves have recently received a severe shock that has undoubtedly caused this trouble. You are too sensible to take offense when I say that you have a remarkably fine physical organization, that is both sensitive and impressionable. You have good eyes, but they will often give you trouble. I have not time now to explain why, but they will. The remedy in your case is very simple, the medicine easy to take: you must rest your eyes.”

“Nothing else?” she queried, smiling in a way that left the Doctor in doubt as to whether or not she were making light of him.

“Oh, of course, a little powder or two,” he replied, taking from his pocket a small tablet upon which he scrawled some mysterious hieroglyphics, and while he did so his fair patient found herself admiring his ability, as patients often do when a physician assures them that the terrible malady which they fancy they have is simply some slight disorder.

While the Doctor's main remedy was undoubtedly the absolute rest of the eyes, he was too shrewd a practitioner not to leave a prescription to be filled at the corner drug-store; for a doctor would hardly be called a second time should he omit that function of his calling.

Turning to Aunt Rebecca, he said:

"Let her have complete rest for a few days and cheerful company, and be especially careful of her eyes. They must have rest. You know what a time I've had in curing you of that obstinate case of dyspepsia—all because you didn't early have proper treatment of your eyes. The world will learn more some day about the human eye and its intimate relations to the rest of the body."

"It's marvelous, Doctor, perfectly marvelous, what strides your profession has made! There is the hand of Providence in it, I am sure. Just think, when I was a girl they still practiced blood-letting!" And her thin hands went up in astonishment.

As the Doctor made ready to go he repeated his orders in regard to the patient having pleasant company, and Aunt Rebecca asked whom she should admit.

"Well," said he, "there's Miss Bardsley. She has a cheerful, sympathetic nature, and she's a born nurse. My, what eyes, what grace, what deltoids!" said the Doctor musingly as he recalled Miss Bardsley's face and figure.

"Yes," assented Aunt Rebecca, who did not know a deltoid from an article of faith; "but don't you think she's a bit of a flirt? Mrs. Boylston says—"

"Bah! Good-day," interrupted the Doctor impatiently, and hurrying away. How could anyone speak of Madge

Bardsley in terms other than of praise! The Doctor mentally resented it.

Dr. Eisler soon met Morton with a bouquet in his hands which he was about to send up to the sick-room, and while the two were talking together on the hotel steps the irrepressible Col. Ferguson came up to them.

"Gents," he began suavely, "excuse me — must ketch a train — want ter say a word ter th' Jedge, here,—like ter see him a minute an' a half privately on important business. Jest a minute, Doc."

Morton excused himself, and stepped aside with the Colonel.

"See here," said Ferguson hurriedly, "can't you run in to-morrow? Great scheme — want ter tell you all about it — rare chance — big money — sure thing — bound ter win out — Oro Grande snap — bulliest propersition yet. *Sabe?*"

"I'll see. Perhaps," said Morton, vaguely.

"No 'perhaps' goes. Don't let no grass grow under your hoofs. Time, tide, taxes an' trains don't wait fer nobody. I'll see you later," and the dapper colonel hurried away.

"Queer chap that," said the Doctor to Morton as he returned.

"It seems to me I meet him at every turn, and he always assures me that he will see me again."

"He's a great schemer, but after all, he has his good qualities; he's generous to a fault. Sometimes I think that he drinks soda-water down at the springs not so much because he cares for the water, as that he likes to give a quarter to the boy that waits on him."

The Doctor here got into his buggy, and Morton called to him, "See you later!"

"I see you've got the Colonel down fine," laughed the Doctor, giving his horse a touch of the whip.

Dr. Eisler had scarcely turned the corner before the Colonel, all out of breath, came rushing up to Morton, for he feared that Eisler might have said something that would interfere with his plans.

"Train's ten late. Thought I'd jest put a small flea in your ear 'bout that doctor," he fired away. "I've nothin' 'gainst him as a doctor, though he's a crank — got a fool notion now that ev'ry disease comes from a-strainin' of th' eye. Reckon, though, ev'ry doctor has his fads. People like ter pay fer bein' treated fer th' latest thing that's dated. 'Pendicitis was good money while it lasted, but it's 'bout played out. Now it's a nervous disorder, an' you reach it through th' eye."

"He's a nice fellow, though, eh?" suggested Morton.

"Didn't say nothin' agin Ferguson, did he?"

"Oh, no; quite the contrary."

"Yes, he's a nice enough, but you'd better keep an eagle eye on him. He might fall in love with a patient. *Sabe?* An' don't mind what he says on business. Pills has their place, but not in a minin' propersition. Tell you more later — must ketch that train. See you l-a-t-e-r." And the agile Colonel flung himself down the steps and along the gravelly walk at a gait that would have made envious a belated New-Yorker trying to catch a ferry-boat. The Colonel's slight limp never seemed to interfere with his speed. Indeed, the cane that he always carried seemed to accelerate him.

Whether Dr. Eisler's eye theory of disease was right or wrong, it is certain that that "remarkably fine physical organization" was confined to its bed with mountain fever, and so, in a short time, the Doctor added wild-sage tea to his prescriptions.

In pursuance of the Doctor's suggestion and Madge Bardsley's inclination, the latter was with Agnes a great deal during her illness, and of course the intimacy brought its confidences, and thus Agnes learned that Madge had never been engaged to DeLancey, though she had known him from his early boyhood and had received his fitful attentions.

DeLancey may have led Mrs. Boylston to believe that he was engaged to Madge, but if so, it was a fabrication designed for some purpose of his own. The reason why Madge had telegraphed him to meet her at the depot was because her father had suggested that it might be well to do so, since she was a stranger to the place and he might be of assistance to her in getting located.

During Agnes's convalescence, Morton was all attention and devotion, for, instead of his making love to Madge Bardsley, as Mrs. Boylston had fancied he would, he had put his troubles before her in a hypothetical case, and received some very sensible advice to the effect that he should not condemn one he loved without first giving her an opportunity to explain; and of course when he did that, a reconciliation speedily followed.

Agnes was soon able to go on long drives, and it was astonishing how rapidly the color returned to her cheeks. Whenever she and Morton made excursions into the neighboring mountains they beheld newer shades and brighter

tints, for they were living, so to speak, above the clouds, in a realm of uninterrupted sunshine, and were experiencing that best of heaven's blessings, the consciousness of an abiding and perfect love.

One day, while driving along the foot-hills, they came upon a lonely grave at the edge of a sandy knoll; neither tree, nor shrub, nor bird was to be seen, and short-tufted and scanty grass, brown, sere and starved, added to the dreariness. Beyond the grave a cactus, armed by nature for protection against familiar encroachment, bristled threateningly. At either end of the grave was a painted board with faded letters, in which could be dimly traced a woman's name, and near by was a withered calla lily, in a scalloped paper tied with a bit of string.

While they were looking at the mere scar in the prairie a gust of wind caught up the paper and blew the faded flower away. Though not superstitious, Agnes was much affected by the incident, and her eyes filled with tears. Morton silently watched her. Presently she said:

"Robert, who knows but that when she was laid here a loving heart was broken? What devotion there must have been! Surely, a love that brings its tribute here so long after, must —"

She did not finish the sentence, but it was unnecessary that she should, for he understood her thoughts. Running through the bright woof of human happiness is that dark thread of fear — the dread of separation from those we love — a thing that neither philosophy nor religion can ever quite obliterate. The unwelcome thought had come to them, and they silently clasped hands as if the peril were imminent.

Before they were out of sight of the grave, they met Col. Ferguson trudging along the dusty road with something loosely wrapped in paper in his right hand. As they drew near, he tipped his hat, and they stopped to chat with him.

"Mr. Morton tells me you have resided here many years," said Agnes.

"Yes'm; off an' on," replied the Colonel, leaning on his cane to rest.

"Can you tell us whose grave that is over there?" she asked, pointing.

The Colonel cleared his throat.

"Th' one that has a board readin' 'JULIA'? Well, ma'am, it's Julia's grave. Needs a monument, doesn't it? Needs it bad. Hey?" And he looked into the young woman's face as though he expected to find there a rebuke for such neglect of duty.

"It has a better one now than any mere marble; she still lives in someone's heart," said Agnes.

The Colonel, under pretense of wiping the dust from his face, brushed away some tears that were welling up in his eyes. Then, much to his relief, Morton shifted the subject by asking him where he got such beautiful flowers, pointing to the bouquet, the end of which was protruding from a wrapper of paper.

"Down at Uncle Israel Goodman's. Often go there. Don't care so much fer th' flowers, but like ter help th' old man a bit when I can. Say, he's white, an' all-wool-an'-a-yard-wide, as th' sayin' is, an' if ever you want anything in his line, don't fergit him. He don't perless so much, but he does a heap of good. Never was much on religion

myself, though I reckon it's like vaccination,—a good thing when it takes well."

"Is he very poor?" queried Agnes, whose sympathy was aroused.

"Don't b'lieve that he knows whether he is or isn't. Never see a man care less fer th' filthy. If he had a hogshead of it he'd be jest that gen'rous an' honest ter a fault. You'd orter hear him talk 'bout th' blessin' of bein' poor. Poverty may be what he claims fer it, but Ferguson 'ud ruther wrastle with a whoppin' big bank account an' take his chances hereafter of gittin' a needle with a big eye. You'd think Uncle Israel 'ud die of lonesomeness, a livin' down there all alone, but he's as happy as a dozen larks!"

"Don't you, yourself, get lonely out here?" asked Agnes.

"Never. Keep a-movin'. Reckon, though, that after th' season's over an' you folks is all gone, 't will be like bein' sixteen miles from a lemon an' twice as fur from water!"

"I don't see much to live for out here," mused Agnes, not for the moment thinking of Morton and her love.

"Life," observed the Colonel, "isn't jest th' summers you put in in Colorado, ner th' winters you spend in Californy, is it? Uncle Israel says it's th' times you put your shoulder ter th' wheel an' help some other chap out of th' quicksand. An' that's th' kind of a man he is, too."

"By the way, Colonel," said Agnes, "papa wished me to ask you whether you thought that the corner lot which he once bought of you—I think it was in an addition called Timberline—is worth paying taxes on."

"Tell him yes. As a matter of course, jest now that

partic'lar localerty is a trifle off color, but we're an expandin' country, an' there's no tellin' what day commerce may take another flop our way an' th' demand be on big agin. Look at Chicago! There was a time when you could 'a' swapped a pair of your cowhide boots fer th' whole town-site, but now how much could you git fer a pair? Not much more 'n th' soles 'ud cover, I reckon; don't you?"

Agnes did not express her opinion, but smiled appreciatingly, and the Colonel tipped his hat, said "*Adios*," and in a little while was bending over the grave and placing the flowers upon it, and as he did so he soliloquized:

"Julia, you'll fergive your old brother fer not a-comin' ter you when you was sick an' needed him, won't you? What? Say that you will? He's awful sorry, but he didn't know. Th' baby'll never want fer a friend as long as her uncle Golden lives. Say, hain't you heard th' news? But, of course you have, fer they say that angels knows all that's happenin' down here ter them they used ter love, an' so you must know that she's struck it rich. Shall I tell her now 'bout her ma?"

A little later the Colonel was "hoofin' it back ter town," as he would express it, when a vagabond, half-starved mongrel cur came limping along the road. Sand-burs had gotten between the poor thing's toes, and it was with much difficulty that the Colonel by the use of his pocket-knife was able finally to extract them. Then he petted the poor fellow a bit, and in return for his kindness the dog followed him.

When at length the Colonel got to his office he found Wildman waiting for him.

"Where in the world have you been, Goldy? You said

you'd be back an hour ago, and I've been looking everywhere for you. You lost a fine sale. I couldn't hold the customer any longer," said Wildman, with ill-concealed displeasure.

"Well, Joe, it was like this: Sandy, here, took up 'bout an hour of my time in a-liftin' burs. Don't see of what good sand-burs an' cactus is, 'less th' Almighty had some object in a-pesticatin' brutes; do you?" the Colonel philosophized.

"I can't answer you, but I know that mangy cur cost you \$500!"

"He did? Don't look ter be wuth it, does he?" blandly observed the Colonel, reaching down to stroke the dog's head.

"Worth it! I wouldn't give a dollar for five hundred such as he."

"But, Joe," protested the Colonel, "you wouldn't let a poor, sufferin', friendless critter go on three-cornered that-a-way when you could help him, would you? Not even if th' whole town was a-clamorin fer minin' stocks. What?"

Wildman was silenced, and the poor dog, as if called upon to give some token of appreciation, rapped his bony tail audibly on the floor.

"Listen ter that! That means 'Thank you.' Ruther have a dog's thank-you than some folks's," said the Colonel, lighting a fresh cigar. Then, addressing the dog, he continued: "Never you mind, old feller; you're not so blamed purty, but you've got a heart in you as big as an ox's, an' you can jest stay an' snooze as long as you wants ter, pervided Mr. Wildman, here, doesn't kick."

Wildman didn't "kick."

“Used ter keep three dogs,” mused the Colonel, puffing at his cigar, “and when I strike it rich agin am goin’ ter have five: a bull fer grit, a pug fer cute, a spaniel fer sense, a setter fer sport, an’ a Mexican hairless fer looks an’ rheumatiz. Mebbe you think I won’t have a bully good time. What?”

CHAPTER X.

A DISCIPLE OF EPICTETUS.

MORTON and Dr. Eisler had become fast friends. One morning when they were quietly smoking their cigars, Morton said:

"Doctor, do you know that I can't help wondering how it is that you have lived here so long and met so many charming young women and yet are apparently heart-whole and fancy-free?"

"Well, you see, I'm quite comfortable as I am with my horse and buggy, my books and my hobbies, and no one to find fault with me for doing just as I please. Why should a man so circumstanced think of marrying?"

"But, Doctor, don't you get very lonesome after the season is over? It strikes me that existence out here then would be a decided bore."

"Wasn't it Epictetus who said 'Solitude is a certain condition of a helpless man,' and that one ought to be prepared in a manner to be able to be sufficient for one's self—to be one's own companion? Now, I dislike to admit that I'm such a helpless man, a dependent on society."

"No doubt the old philosopher was right in teaching that a man should be able to entertain himself, but does it follow that he should seek to live alone?"

"I believe, Morton, that he also taught that we should be thankful to God for all things, and always to be content with what happens. So, as his disciple, I accept my situa-

tion and try to think that it's the very best thing for me."

"And you always find yourself sufficient for yourself, I trust?"

"Well, I was just applying a little heathen philosophy to my situation; that was all. Frankly, I admit that a man's own companionship is frequently unsatisfactory and a bore; but then, why should a man want to marry when nine-tenths of the married people vote it a failure?"

"But, Doctor, do they?"

"I may have overstated the percentage, but it's very large, at any rate."

"Don't you consider, Doctor, that we hear more of the failures than of the successes, just as we always hear of the successful miner out here and but little of the many fellows who spend their fortunes and lives in fruitless searches for gold?"

"No doubt we do; but, Morton, it's bad enough—bad enough!"

A little later, Dr. Eisler met Madge Bardsley, who smiled very sweetly on him, and he at once invited her to go with him to the Iron Springs, an invitation that was cheerfully accepted. He did not wish to be rude, but as they were speeding along he could not refrain from gazing upon his beautiful companion, whose serene manner appealed to his fancy like (what is the sweetest thing you can think of?) a perfect morning in June, and the color in whose cheeks suggested the freshness and daintiness of spring flowers.

For a while both were silent, as if absorbed in a contemplation of nature's gorgeousness. To be accurate, Miss

Bardsley may have been thus absorbed, but the Doctor was not, nor was he just then thinking of Epictetus, but rather of how to give verbal expression to some thoughts,—the thoughts that so often find difficulty in being framed into suitable words. Finding his tongue, he said:

“Miss Bardsley, what do you think about — er — marriage being a.— failure?”

“Well, I hardly know, Doctor; but why should you ask *me*?” she said in a coaxing voice, and smiling charmingly.

The Doctor could not think of any reason which he felt like stating, but, her question seeming to require an answer, he said with some hesitation,

“Because — er — I thought you’d know.”

“I don’t know that I have any positive views on that interesting subject. May I ask whether *you* think it is a failure?” she answered, with womanly evasiveness.

“Speaking as a doctor, I’d say that whether married life is to be a success or a failure — depends.” He was uncertain of his conclusion, so he let it go at that. Then there was an awkward pause, broken by the Doctor, who had somewhat recovered his composure, with —

“Madge,” — it was the first time he had ever spoken so familiarly to her, and he was rather startled at his assurance and almost regretted it — “Madge, do you know that I — that I think there is nothing more divine in this world than a happy home. A bachelor here leads a most selfish life. It’s what Balzac calls ‘An hour-glass existence.’”

The Doctor here looked at his companion, whose face was turned away from him.

“You have a very sweet face,” he said boldly, wishing to come nearer the subject. But she did not turn her face

toward him, and he was quite in the dark as to the effect he was producing. Then, assuming courage with his words, he said:

“Madge, I wish to tell you that I —”

He hesitated. Madge’s eyes were lowered, perhaps in anticipation of what was coming, and a very pretty blush mantled her cheeks (it had in it this time the suggestion of chrysanthemums). Her silence aroused in him a suspicion that he had been premature, and there was a vivid redness in his face that betokened a sudden tendency to an alarming congestion.

“Madge,” he repeated, “I wish to tell you that I —”

At this critical juncture, a man on horseback dashed up, calling loudly, “Eisler! O Eisler! Wait! Hold on!”

It was the ubiquitous Col. Ferguson. Some one had been thrown from a carriage, and he had volunteered to fetch a doctor “within four minutes by th’ watch.” He saw no impropriety in riding close behind the buggy until his promise should be kept, and so the Doctor was forced to change the subject of conversation.

Presently they met Wildman on horseback, coming up the road, and as he drew near he politely tipped his hat and smiled, and in return, Madge fairly beamed on him; and the Doctor experienced a new sensation — a feeling that Wildman had trespassed upon his possessions.

“Doctor, do you know him?” Madge asked.

“Yes,” he replied rather curtly.

“I owe him a debt of great gratitude, for one time when I was coming down the Pass, my horse became unmanageable, and I should certainly have been thrown had he not fortunately happened to come up just at that time, and—”

(“It’s a wonder it wasn’t Ferguson; he’s the fellow who’s always around when something is going to happen,” thought the Doctor to himself.)

“Mr. Wildman has asked Miss Hargrave and myself to go out to his ranch. It will be such a rare treat for me.”

The Doctor frowned. He recalled having seen Wildman with Madge Bardsley on several occasions.

“Don’t let him beguile you with his fairy stories of the beauties of ranch life,” ventured the Doctor.

They had now reached the hotel, and the Doctor was glad of it; still, while helping his companion to alight, he received a sweet “Thank you” accompanied by a winning smile—seemingly as bewitching as the one she bestowed upon Wildman a few moments before—that haunted him the rest of that day.

Pretty soon, Ferguson met Eisler and opened on him with—

“Say, Doc., that Boston girl is great, isn’t she? Mighty nigh twenty-four carats? Better keep your eagle eye on that Wildman. What?”

“Me?”

“Yes, you, Henry Eisler, M. D.”

“Well, upon my soul, do you think I am her—” He hesitated, and the Colonel promptly supplied “lover.” Eisler tried to laugh, but made a dismal failure of it.

“You can’t,” the Colonel went on, “fool Ferguson on some things—mines an’ women, fer instance. A feller never gits that red in th’ face when he’s out a-ridin’ with a girl ’less he’s in dead earnest. You looked as if you had a crick in your heart. But, changin’ th’ subject, you recol-

lect a-tellin' me 'bout that aurif'rous new fad of yourn — that eye business — that you could by th' right kind of medicine make over a person's disposish."

"I didn't say that *I* could do it, but I said that it was claimed by scientific men that such a thing *could* be done. Thus, an irritable person may suddenly become amiable, and other traits that are disagreeable give way to their exact opposites," replied the Doctor warmly, as he always did in defense of a pet theory.

"Well, now, look here. Suppose, Doc., that a man was in love with a girl and she was offish with him, what's th' matter that her trouble hain't all in her eye? Why couldn't a smart doctor change her mind, if he jest —"

The Doctor had disappeared.

A few days later, Dr. Eisler was surprised to find Miss Bardsley in waiting at his office.

"Doctor," said she, "I have come to you as patient."

"I declare! What's the matter?" he inquired eagerly.

"Oh, don't be alarmed. I guess that it's only my eyes," she laughed.

"Only your eyes? Why, my! Why, don't you know that most serious results come from an abuse of the eye?"

"Oh, I don't think, Doctor, that they are in a condition to cause serious alarm. The bright sunlight here is very trying to them."

"Of course it is."

"And I have perhaps overtaxed them —"

"Of course you have."

"They need rest, I presume."

"Of course they do."

"Any medicine?"

"I must see,—must examine them." And he proceeded to examine her beautiful eyes with a care that he had never before shown any human eye. And while he did so, he went on:

"It's queer, the way some people do neglect their eyes, or ruin them with poor glasses. There's Mrs. Boylston, for instance, who might have been a very different sort of woman had she had her eyes properly treated years ago. Am glad that you came to me at once."

"I never put off anything that I feel should be attended to at once, Doctor."

"That's wise. So many put off going to a doctor till it may be too late. They don't appreciate the wonderful relationship of the eye to the body, and that it may produce disease elsewhere — may even affect the disposition. Many a dyspeptic like Aunt Rebecca Norwood is simply suffering from a nervous disorder traceable to the eye."

"You surprise me, Doctor; I had no idea —" she interjected.

"You see," continued the Doctor in that unctuous way which many a doctor has of impressing the patient with his modern attainments, "every function of the organs of the entire body is controlled by the nerves, and when an organ — be it the heart, the liver, or any other — does its work differently from that assigned to it, we may infer that it has received some abnormal nervous impulse. Now, you will understand that the visual nerves are more sensitive than those that govern the action of most other parts of the body, and these nerves suffer a constant strain because of defects in the ocular muscles — defects that are often unsuspected by the patient. This long-continued eye-

strain often produces disease in organs remote from the eye, and these diseases often affect not only the general health, but even the very disposition or character."

"Your explanation, Doctor, seems reasonable; but am I to understand that you think my disposition needs attention?" she inquired, casting a puzzling glance.

"I don't think that one's disposition can be *injured* by relieving the eye-strain," he replied, evasively; and adding: "There's no telling how much sweeter a woman may become — though she may be already considered angelic in spite of her overtaxed visual nerves."

Here the Doctor colored visibly, and busied himself at writing a prescription, which he handed to his fair patient, who thereupon departed.

When Dr. Eisler was again by himself he said, striking his knees with some emphasis: "I'll put that theory to the test. Who knows but that I can make her love me? Medicine is a great science. I'm much obliged to Ferguson for that suggestion of his."

Col. Ferguson soon met Miss Bardsley, and, after exchanging the usual observations about the state of the weather, he steered the conversation round to Dr. Eisler.

"He's kinder bashful with th' women," remarked the Colonel, "but he's got a great head on him — forehead runs up above timber-line. I was back East one time, ter th' town he come from, though he don't know it. Folks there give him a big send-off as a doctor. You may wonder why he'd leave a big practice an' come out here, but he had a good reason fer it, m'am."

"Yes?" said Miss Bardsley, giving the word an inflection which the Colonel interpreted to mean, "Do tell me

all." And he did. So, Miss Bardsley came to know things about the Doctor's past life, which he little dreamed anyone in Cameo Springs knew, and her sympathy for him was aroused, and that, sometimes, is a long step toward gaining a woman's love.

As the Colonel hurried away he met Clarisse Montcheux, the young girl whom Madge Bardsley on the morning of her arrival saw astride of a burro; and something of her history and that of her family will now be related.

CHAPTER XI.

THE MONTCHAVEUX FAMILY.

IN the early days of a certain Western city, Montchaveux was a name well known to aristocratic circles, but as has many another seemingly designed for the possessor of great wealth, it somehow, through the vicissitudes of fortune, came to be found above the door of a poor baker in a Colorado mining town. Such a name, however, was not destined to remain in obscurity, and so, in the fullness of time and by reason of the head of the house "striking it rich" in mines, it came to be accepted at the banks for almost any amount which that head saw fit to write upon the face of a check.

It is not so remarkable, therefore, that this formerly distinguished name should again, after the lapse of a generation or two, adorn a door-plate, or that a certain new house on "Quality Hill" should be spoken of in the newspapers as the "Montchaveux mansion," or that the interior of that house should have been furnished according to the orders of its owner, "regardless of expense." And it may be further observed, as tending to show how complete was the transformation in the surroundings of the family from its humble quarters over the bakery, that articles of virtue were ordered in quantity—Venuses, Parian and otherwise; rugs, occidental and oriental; tapestries, dim with age and brilliant with newness; books, ancient and modern, in red, blue, and green bindings of the most expensive

sort, and all warranted to fit the mahogany shelves: in short, everything in most prodigal profusion.

And then, to cap the climax, they prefixed a "de" to their name, thus establishing beyond peradventure, as they fancied, its claims to an undoubted French nativity and aristocratic preëminence; but we shall leave it off, since Clarisse despised it.

And so it came to pass that an invitation to one of Madame Montchaveux's luncheons was a thing long to be remembered and talked about by any lady fortunate enough to receive one. And thus, too, the Madame's card soon came to occupy carelessly conspicuous places on many Denver center-tables. To have the Madame Montchaveux carriage with its fine team of bobtails in silver-plated and jingling harness, and its liveried and erect sable driver, stand in front of one's house on a pleasant afternoon while the Montchaveux, mother and daughter, condescendingly returned a call, was enough to make a less-fortunate neighbor turn green with envy.

As for Montchaveux, *père*, his sudden acquisition of riches had curiously enough brought him into prominence as a politician, certain of his friends discovering that he was possessed of preëminent qualifications for the legislature. He did not feel that he had the right to refuse their urgent appeals, so he said, and so in due time he was elected, and there was a torchlight procession, and a pyrotechnic display costing some hundreds of dollars, the bills for which were sent to the newly elected senator for payment. It was then hinted to him by his confidential advisers that—should his mines continue to yield in the

future as they had in the past—yet higher honors were in waiting.

Now, there was really no good reason why Madame Montchaveux and daughter should leave their luxurious home and go to Cameo Springs for the season, unless it was the edict of their set in society which made it, as explained by the daughter, "*en regle*," for both were in the best of health, and mountain air would not be much of a change for them. But they came, bringing with them a maid and numerous large canvas-covered trunks containing the paraphernalia for the summer's campaign, "de Montchaveux" in big black letters being conspicuous on the ends of each trunk.

The suite of rooms which had been reserved for them was marked "Parlor A"—for which, as is customary, an extra charge was made, though the accommodations may have been no better than others had who were content with a number in plain white enamel.

"Parlor A" with its southern and eastern exposures was indeed a comfortable enough apartment, much finer than any the wife and daughter of "Monty, the Baker," (as he used to be called in the mining camp,) had ever dreamed of before their change in fortune. And yet the pudgy Madame elevated her *retrousse* nose, and declared upon being shown the rooms that she did not see how it would be at all possible for herself and daughter to get along in such cramped quarters. Upon being assured over and over again by the clerk that they were the very best in "the house," and that it was the very finest, newest and most expensively furnished in the town, she at last consented to occupy them.

Clarisse Montchaveux was not beautiful either in face or figure. To confess the whole truth, she was not even pretty. Nature had been stingy to her. Her slender figure in her big-sleeved dress suggested the simile of an exclamation-point that has been slightly spread in blotting, and her hair was of that not uncommon hue which causes some people to glance about for a white horse. In short, she was the kind of girl to whom wealth is an undeniable compensation, and had it come to her family sooner, she might have had certain accomplishments that would now be of great advantage to her.

Clarisse was now seventeen, and Madame Montchaveux, recalling the fact that at that age she herself was married and settled, was bent on bringing her out without further delay. And, further considering the mutations of time and the uncertainties of riches, the Madame was quite anxious to see her marry something more substantial than a foreigner with a title; hence she had pretty thoroughly instilled into the girl's head the importance of a vigilant lookout for a husband who should not only keep what would be hers in her own right, but who should add a million or two of his own dollars to the fortune.

The passion for money seemed, indeed, to have grown upon the Madame since she had come into a fortune; the time was when she did not care a sou (you might say a "penny," but it was "sou" with the Madame) for it, and was quite happy with her sleeves rolled up and her hands in the dough — but we really should not refer to the bakery, that distasteful and hated thing. Madame Montchaveux would have given — most willingly given — half her fortune had that bakery been but a dream. Indeed,

she was constantly imagining that behind the fans of her neighbors the most delicious detractions were being spelled out, and the word always began with "b" and ended with "y." Like many a narrow soul, because she, herself, now looked down upon the trades-people as degraded creatures, she fancied that others would seek that vulnerable point in her career as the one best suited to their envious natures and designing purposes.

Miss Clarisse was more independent, and snapped her bejeweled fingers at the world with a nonchalance that often vexed and worried her mother almost to the verge of distraction.

Another thing which worried the Montchaveux *mère*, was the possession of such a fine French name and yet not to be able to speak a word of that language. "You must be French," was sure to be the first thing to greet her ears upon meeting strangers, to which she would plead guilty with a conscious pride and in a set phrase which, she fancied, would satisfy her questioner that she *could* speak French, and that it was with some difficulty that she *did* speak English.

Though there were some who conveniently got out of the way when they saw Miss Clarisse coming, still she had her admirers, for she was honest, impulsive, free from affectation, and had a way of setting aside conventionalities that was attractive to some men. Though possessed of none of those gentle graces which so unconsciously captivate one, this willowy and outspoken creature from the mountains, this girl with the restless activity and clear eyes of a wild animal, commanded, rather than invited, attention.

Being a most accomplished dancer, and, moreover, very fond of that amusement, Clarisse soon found her way into Cameo Springs society. Of course she may have been aided somewhat by the rumors afloat concerning the enormous wealth of her father — rumors that neither she nor her mother took any pains to check. These things in combination won for her in certain quarters great popularity, — that is to say, the numbers on her program were eagerly sought after; but in certain other quarters she was received with a frigidity that would have caused a more sensitive girl to be extremely uncomfortable.

In this case it was the ambitious mother who suffered. To see one's only daughter slighted, ignored and avoided in society, is something to which no mother can submit with any degree of composure, and the pain which such treatment brings to her is usually in inverse ratio to the measure of blindness with which she views her darling's shortcomings. And so, Madame Montchaveux suffered intensely; so intensely, in truth, that Clarisse's popularity at the "hops" did not serve appreciably to mollify it.

It is hardly necessary to say that this interesting mother and daughter had a sufficiently large quantity of costly jewelry to enable them to make a most vulgar display whenever they saw fit, and it must be confessed that they did see fit very often so to do. Not every woman, of course, who makes such a display has suddenly become rich, but every woman who springs at a bound from poverty to affluence may be safely counted on to do so.

On the very day of her arrival Madame Montchaveux received a letter at the hotel office, and the avidity with

which she tore open the envelope showed plainly that she was not accustomed to getting many letters.

"Who's it from?" asked Clarisse at her elbow.

"Oh, it's nothing but an advertisement from some fool broker. I suppose he is silly enough to think that because we struck it rich once we would be fools enough to try again. No, thank you, Mr. Ferguson; you may catch the tenderfoot, but not me — not me!" And she tore up the printed slip in a way that could leave no doubt of her decision on that point, and that also indicated something of the temper of which she was possessed.

And that very day Col. Ferguson met Clarisse, and was soon in animated conversation with her. He sought to put himself on friendly terms with her by saying that he used to know her "people."

"Never heard pa speak of you," she said frankly, chewing on a wad of gum most vigorously.

"No; reckon not. Th' Senator is so busy with politics, don't s'pose he ever thinks of his old friends. But you jest ask him some fine day if he don't remember a feller 'bout my size that used ter run a newspaper an' hang around his bakery, an' —"

"Pa don't remember things *that* far back," she interrupted with a little laugh, and shifting the wad in her mouth to the other side.

"Reckon not; I'd not neither, I reckon, if I'd played in as great luck as he has."

"Pshaw! I don't let that make no dif. with me. Bakers is just as good folks as — bankers, if they're *white* with people, and a good deal more of use sometimes when folks is hungry."

"That's right! Don't think riches 'ud make no difference with me neither."

"Thought you just said 't would; but you're one of them agents fer sellin' mines," she laughed sarcastically, as much as to say, "Of course, I expected that you would lie about it."

Usually it was not an easy matter to discomfit the Colonel, but this remark came nearer doing it than anything he had heard in years. He tried to laugh and to take it lightly, but made a dismal failure of it. Not knowing just what to say, he invited her to bring her mother down to his office and see something "great in th' way of ore."

"It won't do you no good, if I do. Ma's too smart to be taken in on samples," she protested, still chewing away.

But the Colonel was not to be thus put off, and upon his assuring her that he understood perfectly well that such shrewd speculators as the Montchaveux people would not buy things "sight unseen," yet that it would be a pleasure to show what he had to persons who could appreciate it, he secured the girl's promise.

To have Madame Montchaveux an apparent customer he judged would be a great "ad.," for in times when speculation is rife, people are apt blindly to follow the successful ones as sheep do a leader with a bell.

The Colonel had another reason for inviting the girl to his office, which will be made known later; but it may be stated here that she noticed that, in parting, he held her hand longer and tighter than was necessary, and that there was a tender expression in his eyes, and she thought he would really have kissed her had he dared.

When she returned to the hotel, Clarisse asked Madame Montchaveux, who was vainly trying to become interested in a French novel (English translation), whether she remembered a fellow named Ferguson, who formerly lived up at the mines. The Madame's face colored. There it was again — that horrid bakery experience coming up. She raised the book closer to her eyes and snapped out,

“No, I don't.”

“He said he used to run a paper up there.”

“Well, what of him?”

“I met him a while ago, and he said he used to know us up there when we kept a baker —”

“Clarisse, don't speak to him. He's too common!”

“He wants us to come down and look at his samples.”

“I say, don't speak to him again!”

“But, ma —”

“What would your father, the Senator, say? You know he don't approve of your speakin' to such —”

“But, ma, he's not in the newspaper business now. He's a minin' agent, and wears good clothes, and has such a perfectly lovely diamond pin. It's a sight bigger 'n any you've got. Guess he must have struck it rich up at Oro Grande.”

Madame Montchaveux dropped her book into her lap.

“Is that so? Tell him, dear, that I'd be glad to have him call.”

CHAPTER XII.

CLARISSE MAKES A DISCOVERY.

TWO WOMEN of mature years each making a vulgar display of wealth cannot long remain at the same hotel without coming to know a good deal of each other. Madame Montchaveux had not failed to take due notice of the fine clothes worn by Mrs. Boylston, and the latter had been duly impressed by the dazzling stones on the stubby fingers of the former.

Worshipping thus at the same golden shrine, they early discovered common tastes,—tastes that led to the bestowal of confidences. And so it happened that the Madame was soon in possession of the probable financial standing of all the people at the Springs with whom Mrs. Boylston was acquainted.

Now, to have the prospective fortune of Clarisse Montchaveux added to that of DeLancey was a *coup d'etat* believed by Mrs. Boylston quite possible of consummation, and to that end she bent her energies and brought to bear her tact. Could that be brought about she would have the not inconsiderable satisfaction of seeing Madge Bardsley barred, as she fancied, from the DeLancey household, and also the further pleasure of witnessing Agnes Hargrave in contrition for her treatment of DeLancey. Possibly, too, she would take a delight in thus proving to Aunt Rebecca that there were young women of sufficient discernment to snap up such a chance as that offered to her niece.

DeLancey had been introduced to Clarisse, and had at-

tended a party given by the Madame for her daughter's benefit; and, by the way, that distinguished parvenu, when she set about giving a social function, spared no expense in making it a little more *recherche* (you will pardon a word of French in this connection, will you not?) than any given by others in her set.

So much had Clarisse's time been occupied by the boys and girls in excursions here and there, and so little disposed was she to mingle with older people, that DeLancey had not as a matter of fact got further than a speaking acquaintance with her; though he led others to believe that much of her time was monopolized by him. Thus the situation was when DeLancey met Clarisse one evening. They were promenading, he puffing at a cigarette, she chewing gum and carelessly twirling her straw hat by its strings, when he remarked,

"I hear that your father is a senator."

"He'd ought to be. It cost him enough. When you buy and pay for a thing, it's yours, hain't it? They all say that if the mines hold out he'll be in the United States Senate some day, if he wants to go. He's worth more now than some of them that's there, I guess."

"Must be very wealthy."

"Not so awful—mebbe a couple of million. Hain't your governor got that much?"

DeLancey lit a fresh cigarette and puffed at it in an abstraction of sheerest indolence, and evaded the question by asking whether smoking was offensive to her. He did this in that perfunctory way that often leads young women at such times to prevaricate.

"No," said she; "but if I was a man and wanted to smoke I'd use cigars."

"Why?"

"Because I'd feel as if I'd done something worth while."

After a short pause, she said irrelevantly.

"Where did you get that 'de' to your name which you spell with a big D?"

"Ah, weally, I don't just — er —"

"More'n likely your folks just faked it like we did the 'de' in ours. Were your folks ashamed of the Lancey and pinned on the 'De' when they struck it rich?"

"My family was always well-to-do," he observed, very modestly for him.

"You've played in great luck then. How much are your folks worth?"

"Worth?"

"Yes. Are they so rich that you don't know, or so in debt that you can't tell?"

DeLancey gave a forced laugh, but made no answer.

"Don't see why some folks is so ticklish about their pile. It ain't no disgrace to tell, is it? — unless 't was made gambling, or some such hook or crook. Your pa didn't do *that*, did he?"

"My father is a banker."

"Pshaw! that don't go."

"It does with us."

"Not much; bankers will slip a cold deck on you as quick as any."

"It 's not — aw — considered good form with us to wefer to the way our fortunes were made."

"They say you're an alecky dude," she returned, changing the subject with feline alertness, and filled with resentment at his last remark, which she construed to be a reflection on her. She now spoke in a high key, and purposely loud enough for some young people near by to overhear. Poor DeLancey cast about; he had caught a tartar.

"Please don't talk so loud," he pleaded, his face flushing.

"Clarisse, dear!" called Madame Montchaveux from a bevy of elderly matrons sitting a little farther away.

"Yes, ma," answered the girl, making her way thither.

"I've just had a round-up with that talented Alexander from Boston," announced Clarisse as she approached, "and knocked him out of the box in the first round. I'll learn him to tell me what's *good form* — the idiotic dude!" she went on excitedly.

"Clarisse, how you do talk! Ladies, you must excuse my daughter. Isn't eet perfectly dreadful ze vay ze young people do use this dreadful — what do you call eet? — Oh, yes, I have eet, slang; yes, this dreadful slang!" said the Madame apologetically, at the same time casting a mildly deprecating glance at Clarisse, and then continuing:

"Eet is always this vay, they say, where there's but ze von child — she's petted till she ees spoiled. Come, darling, let's go to ze room." And she retired to Parlor A, there to have it out with the young creature who so often mortified her, yet who nevertheless was her heart's idol.

When the door was shut, the elder Montchaveux began:

"You're smart, I must say! Here I am at an expense of I don't know how much a day on your account, and you've ruined the best chance of the season!"

Clarisse remained silent for a moment, the color fast mounting to her cheeks.

"You have no tact!" cried the Madame.

"Well, I don't care if I haven't. I hain't goin' to let no Eastern snip of a dude tell me what's proper form," retorted Clarisse, her eyes flashing with an indignation in which she was soon joined by the Madame as the former proceeded to relate the conversation, duly colored to suit her wounded feelings.

"If the Senator was here he 'd lick him!" exclaimed the Madame, her sensibilities now worked up to the highest pitch. "I've a good mind to take the next train for home," she added.

"Do, ma; there's nothing here worth wasting your powder on," urged Clarisse.

"I will, dear, if you say so; but what would folks in Denver say to see us coming back so soon?"

"I'll tell you what let's do," said Clarisse, a happy thought striking her apropos the situation; "let's pack up our duds and go to Glenwood — there's more of our kind of people up there."

"Clarisse, you darling, you're such a comfort. I'd never thought of that — never in the wide world! We'll just do that very thing." And she smoothed the girl's hair in a way that showed how completely a mother may be dominated by a daughter.

Before they left for Glenwood, Clarisse met Col. Ferguson and guilelessly told him all that Madame Montcheux had said about him.

"She thought, at first, that Ferguson wasn't good enough fer you, hey? Well, you tell her to go ter —— *Sabe?*"

He spoke with more than usual emphasis and his eyes fairly snapped.

"Well, I guess I do," replied Clarisse, "I wasn't raised in the Rockies for nothing. You mean that you wish she was *there*, but you don't want me to say it right out. But what are you so hot about? You mustn't think nothing of ma's talk. It's just her way; bark's worse 'n her bite."

"Who's that thing I saw you with?" he demanded.

"Thing?" she queried.

"Yes. Where'd you find him?"

"DeLancey? Oh, he just strayed in from down East," she answered, playfully tossing her hat by its strings.

"Maverick?"

"Well, I didn't see no brand. S'pose I'd have the right to claim him. Eh?"

"Turn him loose quick. That kind of cattle is *no wano*. Run th' range too much."

"How do you know? His pa's a banker," she suggested, teasingly.

"Banker? Worse an' more of it — sure ter be a suckin' calf, an' orter have a board in his nose," he said with emphasis.

"Oh, he's weaned, I guess," she persisted.

"How do you know he is?"

"Well, he's no yearlin'."

"Mebbe so, but th' chances is he's breachy, an' if he was in your corral an' some other heifer mooed ter him there's no fence high enough ter hold him. Now, no woman wants that kind. That's gospel truth!"

"It strikes me you take a heap of trouble where you've

no call. I'm not locoed," said she petulantly, and giving her hat a violent twirl.

The Colonel paced up and down the floor, and, finally getting his feelings under control, he sat down facing Clarisse, and said:

"Clarisse, you're old enough now ter know somethin' of your pedigree, an' I'll tell you, if you like."

"What do you mean?" she asked in surprise.

"Mean that you're *my niece!*"

"Go along!"

"Fact!"

"Why, are you pa's brother?"

"No more his brother 'n you are his daughter; an' I hain't the Madame's brother no more 'n you're her child!"

Clarisse looked at the Colonel in astonishment.

"No, I'm not crazy, girl. Listen, an' I'll tell you 'bout all that I know of our tribe. It's like this: My father was born in Maine, an' my mother in old Virginny; he married her there, an' then they went out ter Missouri, where I made my appearance. Then they pulled up stakes an' went ter Californy in '49 fer gold—you see th' minin' fever's in th' blood — an' Julia, she was born there. Presently they piked out fer Utah, an' from there ter Colorado in '59, when the Pike's Peak boom was on. You see we was of th' rovin' sort. Well, we all hadn't been here so dreadful long till pa an' ma went over th' range, a-leavin' me at fifteen with Julia only eight, an' a ox-team — Buck an' Brindle — an' a shepherd called 'Andy,' a most faithful beast fer kittle-lickin' he was, too."

The Colonel stopped to strike a light for his cigar, and then resumed:

"Fer a few years I hustled an' made a sort of a livin' fer us at freightin'. Then th' war come on, an' I went out with th' Colorado boys. Julia had got a job so she could take care of herself. I s'pected ter come right back, but after th' onpleasantness was over I heard that Julia was spliced an' settled, an' so I stopped off in Texas an' went ter bullwhackin'. After a while I got word that her man had met up with an accident an' didn't git over it, an' that your ma had died, an' so I come up an' found you at th' neighbors."

Here the Colonel choked up, and Clarisse, who had listened with great eagerness, grasped his hand and mingled her tears with his.

"Oh, why did you tell me?" she sobbed.

"Don't know as I had orter, but couldn't stand it no longer; besides, more 'n likely you'd 'a' found it out sometime, an' it's better fer you ter have th' straight of it from me. As I was a-goin' ter say, there was nothin' ter do but fer me ter either git spliced or else put you in a orphans' home. Women was scarce as hen's teeth them days, an' none of 'em wanted a feller with a baby on his hands ter begin with, an' so I jest had ter do th' other thing. It busted me all up ter put you in th' orphans' home, but you won't blame me too much, will you? Didn't want ter give you up; God knows I didn't. Do you hate me fer it?"

"Of course not. What else could you have done?"

"Glad ter hear you say that—glad you don't hold it up agin me."

"But, how did I come to be where—"

"That's what I was 'bout ter explain. Well, after awhile these Montchaveux people, havin' no children of

their own, adopted you. They don't know yet that I'm any kin of your'n, but I always kep' track of you, an' worked round near by so's ter see how you was used. At last they struck it rich, an' I was more tickled than they was, fer I was thinkin' only of my little Clarisse an' what it meant fer her. Then I begun ter knock 'bout fer myself — punched cows, was constable, run a paper (wasn't editor, but owner), railroaded, hustled real estate an' insurance, an' here I am, 'as big as life an' twice as nat'ral,' as th' sayin' is."

"Then my name is —"

"Montchaveux. Th' court fixed that all right an' solid when th' papers was drawed."

"What was my mother's name?"

"'Twas Julia. Now, you'd better not ask no more questions 'bout that. You're straight goods all right, but I don't want ter talk no more jest now 'bout your pa an' ma."

"Where are they buried?"

"Your ma's buried near town here, an I'll show you where to-morrer. Now, girl, you know 'bout all there is ter know 'bout this sorrerful business, an' you must promise me fer your own good ter never breathe a word of what I've said, an' ter stay right where you air, with th' Montchaveux outfit."

He then explained his reasons for this request, and Clarisse promised.

Before they parted, the Colonel gave Clarisse some good advice, and cautioned her about several persons, one of whom was Reginald DeLancey. He also spoke, as an

uncle might, of Joe Wildman, and closed by assuring her of his own great affection for her.

Clarisse left, feeling that she had lived years in that one short hour. How she dreaded meeting Madame Montcheveux! Could she ever again call her "mother"? Fortunately the ordeal was not to be at once, for the Madame was not in her room.

In whatever light she viewed the situation, Clarisse could not shake off the feeling that henceforth she would not have the rights of a daughter in that family, and so she thought of running away and making her own living by work; and doubtless she would have done this, had not the Colonel anticipated these very things and exacted the promise which she now felt bound to keep. She never felt before so much the need of sympathy and some one in whom to confide, but every avenue in that direction seemed closed.

Depressed and miserable, she went down to the parlor, where Joe Wildman chanced to be alone, drumming on the piano. She greeted him with more effusiveness than he had any reason to expect, and he noticed a marked change in her manner. She seemed to have aged perceptibly.

"Now what's the matter?" he asked as she released his hand. "You look as if you'd lost your best friend." And he gazed earnestly into her eyes.

"I'm so homesick that I don't know what to do," said she with an effort to restrain her tears.

"Pshaw!" he laughed; "a girl with all that you have to make her happy has no business to be homesick. Shall I sing you one of the old rollicking college songs? They always cure me of the blues."

"I like to hear you sing, but just now I'd rather talk."

"The girl must be in love," he thought. "If you think you're beyond the reach of music," said he, "you perhaps ought to go and talk to Dr. Eisler; he has a notion that music is a cure-all."

"Let's go out under the trees where no one will interrupt us. I want to talk to you," she said, ignoring his suggestion.

When they were seated in the little park just back of the pavilion, Clarisse began to talk of the old days at the mines, and as she recalled her former happiness her eyes kindled with enthusiasm, for the days of her childhood, passed though they were in obscurity, possessed a strong fascination. One thing led to another, until, being gently pressed for the cause of her unhappiness, she could keep the secret no longer, and, with tears in her eyes, she told all.

"Clarisse," he said, "poor girl, I don't know as you should have told me, after having promised your uncle as you did."

"I don't think that uncle would care for my telling you; he likes you; he said he did," she replied by way of excuse.

"Yes, I think he does. But see here: you must do nothing rash. Use a little philosophy. It will do no good for you to tell Madame Montchaveux what you have learned; on the contrary, it might prove very unwise."

"But, how can I ever again call her *mother*?"

"Or course, I wouldn't have you act the hypocrite, but it's not necessary that you should. You're now a young woman, and you can find a way of simply avoiding it. You can be affectionate to her; nothing has occurred to

lessen your debt of gratitude to her. She has come to think of you as her own child, or as nearly so as a woman ever can under such circumstances. It isn't always wise or best for us to upset things just for the sake of letting it be known that we're undeceived; besides, you can't honorably leave that family even if you want to. They have adopted you, and you are legally their heir."

"I don't want their money; I'd rather go out and work for a living."

"I admire your spirit, Clarisse, but you mustn't think of such a thing. It's unjust to yourself, and it's unjust to them. They have no children of their own, and it will be a pleasure for them to do for you. If they didn't have you, they wouldn't know what to do with their money, and more than likely they would make some wrong use of it. No, no; it's your duty to stay. Promise me that you will."

Clarisse was in deep meditation, and Wildman went on:

"You can gladden their hearts, if you will. Things can go on as they did before; and see what a great opportunity you have of doing good with the means you will have at your command. You could alleviate much suffering, and you must see that the world is full of it."

Clarisse now seemed to get a new and brighter view of her situation. She liked the suggestion in regard to the use of money she could command, and the impulsiveness of her nature made her impatient to do something generous at once.

When they parted, Clarisse gave Wildman's hand a pressure well calculated to impress him with the fervor of her nature and the importance of the secrets she had in-

trusted to his keeping. It was fortunate for her that she had unburdened her heart to one so worthy, for he was, as the Colonel had once said of him, "A feller that'll stand tied."

Shortly thereafter, Clarisse met little Dick Pickens. Heretofore, she had scarcely noticed him, except to give him orders, but now they seemed to stand on common ground: he was an orphan, so was she, and but for the fact of better fortune having fallen to her lot, she, too, might be where he was to-day,—eating of the crumbs of the world's charity and eking out such existence as chance brings.

"Picky," she said, with a tenderness in her tone that attracted his attention, "Picky, tell me something about your life."

"Hain't much ter tell, Miss Clarisse," he answered diffidently.

"Don't you remember your parents?"

"I'm most like that nigger girl that was here in 'Uncle Tom's Cabin,'" said he, grinning broadly, and twisting his head to get a better view of Clarisse's face.

"Maybe you'll find out about them some day, Picky, and maybe your mother was as good as any that ever was," said Clarisse, smoothing the boy's hair softly.

"I'd like ter know it," said he; "but as long as I don't, why, I might as well take it that she was. Like ter think of her as th' *best* mother a feller ever had. I hain't needed no father sence Col. Ferguson took me in."

"That's the way to do, Picky. Say, how much do you get here?"

"Not so much. If I don't get fired, I may earn enough

ter buy me a new suit by th' time th' house closes up, an' if th' Colonel strikes it rich he's goin' ter send me ter school."

"Picky, can you keep a secret?"

"Yes 'm."

"Never tell nobody?"

"Nobody, so hope ter die."

"Well, then, here's twenty dollars for you to buy a new suit with. Be sure, now, that you don't tell."

"Never!"

Pickens took the big gold-piece and held it close to his eyes. It was the most money he had ever had, and he felt very rich. He wished — oh, how much he wished — that he could run and tell Col. Ferguson. To think that he must keep the news of his good fortune from his best friend was the hardest part of his promise. He could have worshipped Clarisse, for in his eyes she was an angel. His little heart was very full, and it never occurred to Clarisse that he did not thank her.

CHAPTER XIII.

"AURIF'ROUS CHUNKS, MA'AM."

ONE morning, Col. Ferguson was surprised to see entering his office a woman pretty well on in years, and of a rather severe cast of countenance.

"Why, Aunt Rebecca!" he exclaimed, "How are you? Take a chair. Nice mornin' — finer 'n silk. Hey?"

This familiar greeting almost took away her breath, for she had thought that he would not remember her, and she had intended not to reveal her identity. The truth was that, having caught the speculative fever, she wished quietly to take "a little flyer," though she would not have called it that. To be at once recognized quite nonplussed her.

"I—I beg your pardon, sir, but I do not remember ever to have been introduced to you," she said with all the dignity at her command.

"That's right, ma'am; you never was. But, you see, I know everybody who's been here six weeks."

"Six weeks!" she exclaimed in astonishment.

"Six weeks, ma'am. You come in six weeks ago yesterday on th' 'Cannon-Ball,' an' I was on th' same sleeper. Had quite a time that mornin', didn't you? Why, you're almost an old settler; they'll be askin' you 'bout th' weather we're goin' ter have, th' first thing you know." And he laughed so good-naturedly and seemed so friendly that Aunt Rebecca hardly knew whether to take offense at his familiarity or not, and before she had made up her

mind — she was rather slow for a woman — he said cheerily:

“Mustn’t care fer my callin’ you ‘Aunt Rebecca,’ fer I feel as though I had knowed you fer years. Remember, too, what you said ’bout cards one night. Besides, everything goes out here, Mrs.—”

“Miss Norwood, if you please.”

“Yes, excuse me, Mrs. Nor —”

“Miss Norwood,” she interrupted sharply.

“Yes, of course. Miss Norwood, what can Ferguson do fer you?”

“I — I just thought I would make a few inquiries for a friend as to the best mining stocks for her to invest in.”

“Well, ma’am, you come ter th’ right place. Let’s see, is she a maiden lady?”

“Well,— ah — y-e-s.”

“An’ she’s saved up about —”

“Fifty dollars.”

“Exactly. Now, I’ll be honest with you.”

“Of course, sir; I expected that.”

“As I was a-goin’ ter say, I don’t jest know of a single minin’ stock that I could sell you — *her*, I mean.”

“Oh, I thought you sold such things.”

“I do, ma’am — lots of ’em — cart-loads.”

“Then why will you not sell to me — I mean my —”

“Because Ferguson’s rule is never ter take th’ earnin’s of no widow, nor orphan, nor old maid.”

“I don’t see why she has not as good a right to make money as anyone else.”

“So she has. I was only a-sayin’ what Ferguson’s rule is.”

"How much per acre do mines sell for?" she asked innocently.

"Well," said he, "we sell most everything out here by the pound, such as potatoes an' peaches, but mines is different; they go by th' lode, an' th' regular size is fifteen hundred by three hundred feet."

"Mercy! What a load!" exclaimed she, supposing that he referred to a wagon-load. "And how deep?"

"As deep as you're a mind ter go on th' vein. Must stay within th' end lines, but you can foller her dip sideways till you're as rich as old man Cræsus or John D. Rockefeller, or — go broke."

"Bankrupt, you mean, sir," she corrected mildly and in a state of bewilderment.

"Yes, that's what I said — till you're busted," he reiterated, thinking she had failed to hear.

There was a moment of silence, broken by Aunt Rebecca asking,

"What would you advise my friend to do with her money?"

"Well, she might buy tracts on th' evils of card-playin' an' dancin'," he laughed.

As Aunt Rebecca was leaving, the Colonel tossed some glistening bits of iron pyrites into a small box and handed them to her, whereat she was as pleased as a child with a new toy, and in partial recompense for his generosity — for she fancied the specimens were of considerable value — she handed him a tract, which later he tossed into a small basket beneath his table.

Aunt Rebecca soon met Mrs. Boylston, and the conversation turned to mining investments. Without letting it

be known that she had just been to the Colonel's office, she took occasion to speak in the highest terms of his honesty.

Now it must not be supposed that the Colonel had met Mrs. Boylston only on the few occasions hereinbefore mentioned, for many a time had he casually dropped in to inquire after her health, or to tell her a story, and many a time had he gone away without having mentioned the subject of mines, unless his story, as sometimes it did, pointed to a fortune made by a trifling investment at Oro Grande. And so it came about that, even before Aunt Rebecca had had a chance to see Mrs. Boylston, the Colonel met her, and the following conversation took place:

"I do declare ter goodness, ma'am, you're lookin' well! This climate — this glorious climate of our'n — does beat th' band. It's chuck-full of 'lectricity. That's right! An' that's th' stuff that rejuvenates an' knocks wrinkles silly."

"Col. Ferguson, do you mean all that your language implies?" she queried, looking hurt.

"Gosh, no! Not at all, ma'am — not you! Heavens an' earth! — how could I? You never had a wrinkle, did you?" He laughed as though such a thing were altogether preposterous, and Mrs. Boylston thereupon blushed becomingly.

The Colonel resumed:

"Was a-thinkin' when I spoke of wrinkles, of a friend of mine who jest left my office."

"Indeed!" And the widow's eyes raised in expectation.

"But can't tell you her name — that 'ud be tellin' secrets, an' Ferguson don't do that."

"Don't people ever die in Colorado?" she asked, her mind reverting to the climate.

"Men do. Pistols an' pneumony is a pair that's harder beat."

"It is a rare —"

"Rare? I should smile. Rare climate, rare air, an' a rare place to make money in. Ev'rything goes, as th' sayin' is. Ev'rything rustles—even th' leaves on th' cottonwood trees."

Mrs. Boylston laughed lightly, and asked the Colonel why it seemed to be so much healthier for women than for men; to which he replied:

"That hain't no hard nut ter crack. Colorado is a bloomin' paradise fer woman; she can vote, an' do purty much as she darned pleases, from a-runnin' fer office ter gittin' married — or unmarried, if that's her fix; an' if she don't see what she wants, all she's got ter do is ter ask, an' th' men'll break their fool necks ter git it fer her. No place better fer widows — grass or otherwise — than Colorado."

"Do the women out here serve on the militia?"

"Not yet, ma'am; but th' time's a-comin' when they'll have that blessed privilege. Only th' other day a lawyer said that he thought women have th' right under th' constitution to *bare* arms."

"Then she could aspire to the title of colonel?" smiled the widow.

"That's right. Oh, I tell you, a woman that's equipped with both the ballot an' th' breeches has a great cinch — a great cinch, ma'am!"

The Colonel here looked at his watch and remarked:

"It's time for Joe Wildman ter be down from th' camp. They're strikin' richer an' richer lodes up there all th' time. Don't seem ter be no limit."

"Loads of gold? Colonel, do you mean it?"

"Yes, ma'am; lodes of aurif'rous—that is ter say—yes'm, gold, yeller gold."

"Pure gold?"

"Well, not exactly pure quill, but it comes mighty near that; great gobs of it—aurif'rous chunks, ma'am!"

"Colonel, excuse my ignorance, but do they shovel it up as one would sand?"

This was too much for the Colonel, and he laughed heartily.

"My dear—" the Colonel cleared his throat and took a fresh start. "My friend, it's not quite that bad up there *yet*." He accented the last word to indicate that he would not be surprised if, in time, scoop-shovels would come into common use at Oro Grande. Then, snapping the lid of his watch a third time, and relighting the stub of a cigar, he smilingly bade his friend "Good-day."

Before leaving, however, the oleaginous fellow gave Mrs. Boylston one of his latest circulars concerning the wonderful resources of the "greatest gold camp on earth."

It may be observed here that the Colonel's schemes, with which he was always well stocked, were often regarded as decidedly visionary by certain hard-headed business men, but the opinion is ventured that, should some of them turn out well, many of those selfsame critics would be among the first to proclaim his sagacity, and to assert that

they had always believed such enthusiasm and energy would so result. Verily, "Nothing succeeds like success."

But just now the Colonel was in hard lines — business was dull. So, when Wildman called that evening he found his friend a trifle down in the mouth. After briefly explaining the situation, the Colonel said:

"Joe, I guess I'll have ter soak th' kohinoor agin."

"What did it cost you?" he asked.

"Fifteen hundred dollars; an' it's all I saved out of th' real-estate boom. ' Like ter keep it as a souvenir."

"Goldy, what will you take for it?"

"Make me an offer."

"Two hundred dollars."

"Done. 'Sold agin, an' got th' tin, an' another soul made happy,' as Holman, th' auctioneer, used ter say."

Then the Colonel began to hum to himself:

"O, Colorado is th' place fer me;
Prettiest women you ever see,
An' they can vote fer you an' me,
In Colorado!"

CHAPTER XIV.

A LITTLE TRIP.

JOE WILDMAN was a typical-looking ranchman,—broad-shouldered, plain of dress, and of quiet demeanor. Though dealing in cattle, he spent much of the summer at the Springs, where he enjoyed the social life and did something in speculation “on the side” as he put it. Being thus a sort of man-about-town, he had often met Madge and Agnes, and, being a general favorite with the older people at the hotels, there was no question of propriety raised when he asked these two young ladies to go with him to his ranch for a day’s outing.

When Madge and Agnes were safely in the rear seat of the covered spring-wagon, Wildman cracked the whip and the broncoes dashed off at a pace that would have greatly frightened the Eastern girl had not the driver’s composure been so reassuring.

While speeding along in a light envelope of dust, Madge became possessed of a strong curiosity to know something more of the history of the quiet fellow on the front seat than she had thus far been able to find out.

“Mr. Wildman, have you resided long in Colorado?” she asked. There was something charming in the way she pronounced “Colorado”—the “a” had such a broad sound.

“Yes, ma’am,” he answered, politely.

“How long, may I ask?”

“Over thirty years.”

"You must have been quite young when you came here?"

"I was," he blushed.

"From the East?"

"No, ma'am."

"That's strange; I thought every one here had come from the East."

"No, ma'am."

"You didn't surely come from the West?"

"No, ma'am."

"Where were you born, Mr. Wildman?"

"In Colorado."

"Is it possible?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Everything out here is so different from what I thought it would be. I can scarcely believe that any grown-up person could have been born here. Why, I really expected to see some wild Indians before this. Have you any on the ranch, Mr. Wildman?"

"Not now."

"Nor buffaloes?"

"No, ma'am."

"I presume that the Indians with their bows and arrows have frightened them all away. Did they, Mr. Wildman?"

"Hardly. There haven't been any on the ranch since I have known the place — ten years."

This was surprising intelligence. However, Madge's persistency had gotten the fellow somewhat beyond monosyllabic responses, and so she felt encouraged to proceed with the examination, which thus far had proved quite amusing to Agnes.

"What has become of the great herds of buffaloes that I've read of? They say they were so numerous at one time as to stop the railroad trains," resumed Madge.

"Dead."

"Pestilence?"

"A sort of one."

"Something that civilization brought, Mr. Wildman?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"What was it called?"

"Bullets."

For a while they drove on in silence.

"Ever been in Boston?" queried Madge.

"Yes. I attended school near there."

"What school, may I ask?"

"Harvard."

Had the wagon suddenly overturned, Madge would hardly have been more surprised.

"Here we are at the ranch," announced Wildman, presently.

"Where?" asked Madge.

"All around here." And he indicated by a sweep of the whip.

"Why, where are the meadows?"

"There aren't any to speak of."

"The idea,—a farm without meadows! Where are the cattle?"

"You'll not see them; we haven't seen them since the round-up last spring; they're out on the range."

"Is your ranch a large one, Mr. Wildman?"

"No, ma'am; only about twenty thousand acres."

"Twenty thousand acres!"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Where is the house?"

"About three miles from here."

"I declare!" said she, and there was another period of silence.

When they came within sight of the house, a field of dark-green and fragrant alfalfa greeted their eyes, and near the road was an irrigating-ditch.

"Why, I declare, that water is surely running up hill!" observed Madge, whose eyes were following the curving line of the ditch along the side of the hill.

"Water in Colorado always runs down grade," said Wildman, blandly, and casting a glance toward Agnes.

"I suppose so, but it does look to me as though it were reversing the law of nature; and I'm prepared for the miraculous, for you know Col. Ferguson says that the unexpected always happens in Colorado."

They had now reached the adobe ranch-house, a building whose interior contrasted strangely with its exterior, for in it there were a fine upright piano, carpets, pictures, books, all of the latest magazines, and bric-à-brac galore. The housekeeper took charge of the visitors and showed them into an elegantly furnished guests' chamber.

When they were alone, Madge said to Agnes,

"Did you notice his large diamond?"

"Yes; and it's fully as large as Col. Ferguson's."

"He must be very rich, don't you think?" asked Madge.

"Very; and did you see that lovely piano? I wonder if he plays."

"We'll find out, although he's not very communicative. I like once in a while to get hold of such a man — like to

ply him with Yankee questions. I do hope that I did not bore him. Do you think I did? Listen, there—he's playing now."

When the young ladies came into the parlor, Wildman was still playing, but the moment he saw them he stopped abruptly.

"Go on. Please do, Mr. Wildman," urged Madge, smiling sweetly.

"No, no: I can't play; I only drum a bit."

"I see you've one of the qualifications of a fine player; you wait to be teased," observed Agnes.

"No, really, I'm quite out of practice; but if Miss Bardsley will play—you do not, I believe, Miss Hargrave—I'll try to sing something, if you wish it." And he went to the well-filled music-rack and began to look over the pieces.

"Here's a piece; let's try it. It's called 'Love of Mine,' said he, blushing. Accompanied by Madge, he then sang in a fine tenor voice:

O Love, thy love is like a rose,—
A rose of perfect bloom,
That fills the air that round it blows,
With searching sweet perfume;
'Tis like the pealing minster chime,
The night-bird's thrilling tone,
That draws the soul to heights sublime,
And joys before unknown.

Like the perfume of the rose,
Like the bird's enraptured song,—
Both in one, Love of mine,—
Is the love that ever glows,
Pure, enduring, sweet and strong,
In that tender heart of thine,
Love of mine, O Love of mine.

In thy dear, honest eyes I see
A steadfast love revealed,
That brings unending joy to me,—
A love with naught concealed;
And constant as the stars that shine,
It crowns a womanhood,
Whose virtues seem almost divine,
So pure are they, and good.

"That's very pretty. I must get it," said Madge, when he had finished.

"I would give you this, but I see it belongs to Dr. Eisler. Guess he liked it because it has a reference in it to the human eye," said Wildman, with a twinkle in his clear blue eyes.

"Why, does the Doctor sing?" she asked in surprise.

"Yes, indeed; he's a fine baritone."

"I do declare! I didn't suppose that he could sing a note," said she, coloring a little.

Luncheon was here announced, and all went in to the dining-room, whose floor was nearly covered with bright-colored Navajo rugs. Above the mantel was a pair of huge antlers, and before the hearth a bearskin, both of which told of Wildman's marksmanship. The table was loaded with choicest edibles and rare pieces of china and cut-glass and silverware. The vegetables were crisp and fresh, and the strawberries—long out of season in the East—were very large and delicious.

During the meal, Wildman, looking in Madge's direction, said:

"How do you think you'd like ranch life?"

"I must say, Mr. Wildman, that I'm perfectly infatuated with it. I should think it would be such fun to

roam over the prairies on a pony; there's such an absence of restraint; such boundless freedom; don't you think so, Agnes?" Madge was a picture of bewitching enthusiasm.

"I like it very much," said Agnes; "but I presume it has some drawbacks, has it not, Mr. Wildman?"

"The loneliness is the worst thing about it," said he, quietly.

"But if it were one's own home," argued Madge, "it might be different.

Wildman made a mental note of this observation.

"How far is it to your nearest neighbor?" ventured Madge.

"Only a few miles," said Wildman.

"Only a few miles to your nearest neighbor!" You Coloradoans amuse me by the utter unconcern with which you speak of things that to us would be considered remarkable. I presume, if one of you were to contemplate a trip around the world, he would speak of it as a most trifling thing," said she, folding her napkin.

"Perhaps so; you know it's no longer a great undertaking, and it is often made nowadays without the traveler writing a book about it. I made that little trip myself last year," replied Wildman.

"There it is — 'that little trip,'" laughed Madge, pushing back her chair.

"I guess we're an extravagant set — at least in our speech," smiled Wildman as he rose from his seat. But he did not add what was in his mind, that no words used in connection with the beauty and charm of Madge Bardsley could be extravagant.

On their way back to town, as they were nearing the

mountains, Wildman's practiced eye informed him that a sudden storm was about to burst upon them. The dark clouds enveloping the distant peaks grew denser and denser, and dropped their mantles lower and lower till the cañons were filled with a funereal blackness, and soon the heavy cannonading was supplanted by a rapid and sharply defined artillery, and then the vivid flashes of zigzag lightning were followed by terrific crashes of thunder, and the mountains disappeared from view.

Without alarming his companions, Wildman sprang from his seat, hurriedly adjusted the curtains, and made ready for the "shower," as he laughingly put it. Scenting the impending storm, the broncoes became restive and wheeled about with their backs to it, and barely had Wildman climbed back into the wagon when the tempest in all its fury was upon them.

Laughing and joking, Wildman tried to cheer up the spirits of the young women, who were now sitting with their fingers in their ears and terror depicted on their faces. The storm increased in fury; rain fell in torrents; the wagon's tires were encircled with rims of blazing fire like the rims of vanishing pin-wheels; the lurid glare of constant flashes of lightning cast an ashen pallor over the faces of the occupants of the wagon; quick reverberations of thunder came at shorter and yet quicker intermissions, till it seemed as though Jove were hurling a whole volley of thunderbolts at their defenseless heads; and then, in less time than it takes to tell it, the rain ceased, though the sharp and terrifying reports kept on for a while as if loth to leave the field with so little damage. Then, in a trice,

behold the mountains, bathed in fresher tints, and newer beauty, and more ravishing splendor!

It was a novel experience for both Agnes and Madge, and, though the wagon cover and their wraps had kept them dry, they were devoutly thankful when Wildman assured them that the storm was over and would not return.

"Quite a shower, that," remarked Madge with as much irony in her tone as she could muster.

"'Twas rather moist," returned Wildman with characteristic nonchalance.

Upon reaching the village, they found Morton and Aunt Rebecca anxiously waiting for them. The former had but just returned from Denver, where he had bought a handsome ring to replace a plain gold one which some weeks before he had rashly thrown away, and, as soon as he was alone with Agnes, he placed it upon her engagement finger, fondly kissing her as he did so.

Agnes then told Morton of her "perfectly lovely" trip to the ranch, and said many complimentary things of Wildman, closing with the confidence that her woman's intuition told her that, if Wildman so willed it, Madge would some day be the mistress of his ranch, and that a handsomer couple it would be hard to find.

CHAPTER XV.

A PITEOUS PREDICAMENT.

It was about this time that DeLancey one morning reported that his room had been entered and his pockets rifled. He could not remember the exact amount of his loss, but was sure that there was a twenty-dollar gold-piece. Suspicion fell, of course, upon the "help," and so each was called up and questioned. When Pickens's turn came he was asked to empty his pockets, which he proceeded to do, when, lo and behold! out rolled a twenty-dollar gold-piece!

"You young rascal, where did you get that?" demanded the clerk, not so much for the purpose of eliciting information as to get a confession for use as evidence.

"Can't tell you, sir," the boy answered, coloring in a way which to the bystanders betokened guilt.

Despite poor little Dick's earnest protests and asseverations, the clerk kept the money, and was about to call an officer, when Col. Ferguson arrived upon the scene. The clerk at once explained the trouble, but gave the boy no chance to be heard in his own defense, if forsooth he had one.

"Jest hold your broncoes," said the Colonel to the young man, whose hair was parted with such nicety that his occupation could readily be guessed, "hold your broncoes, young feller, till I've had a chance ter talk with th' boy. Twenty dollars don't make nor break nobody, 'less it's a hotel clerk."

Then Dick and the Colonel went into the reading-room. The boy there admitted having the money, denied having stolen it, and insisted that it was his own, though he could not be induced to tell how, where, or from whom he got it. The Colonel was perplexed.

"Well, if you won't tell, all I've got ter say is that you'll go over th' road ter Canon City," observed the Colonel thoughtfully.

"I'll have ter go, then," said Pickens, coolly.

"Did th' person that give you that make you promise not ter tell?" asked the Colonel.

"That's it, exact," answered Pickens.

"That's honest Injun, is it?" pressed the Colonel, eyeing the boy sharply.

"Honest Injun; hope ter die," replied Pickens, crossing himself as he used to do when playing marbles and his statements were called in question.

"Well, Picky, Ferguson b'lieves you, but he don't see how it's a-goin' ter help you out of this here scrape. Don't see how you'll keep from bein' railroaded; do you?"

Pickens could think of no way, and the Colonel picked up a newspaper and became as absorbed in it as one ever does when it is held upside down. With his usual quick decisiveness, he appeared to consider the matter not open for further discussion, and poor Pickens felt that he was about to be given into the hands of the law, which, to him, meant swift and certain conviction. Presently, with tears in his eyes, he said:

"Colonel, can't you help me out?"

"There's but one way as I see, Picky, an' that is ter prove a *alibi*."

Pickens did not know what the Colonel meant, and the latter explained.

"That's dead easy," said Pickens, his face brightening. "I wasn't in DeLancey's room at all. That's God's truth!"

The Colonel, smiling at the lad's simplicity, said:

"That'd be all right if Ferguson was twelve men an' on your jury, but you see he's only one, an' he won't likely be on th' jury at that."

The Colonel's usual ready wit in cases of emergency seemed to have deserted him. There was but one course open, and that was to get time for consideration. So he went out and secured a continuance of the matter till next day by promising to stand responsible for Pickens's appearance. He then took him by the hand and walked away, and as they went along toward the Colonel's office the little fellow, consumed with curiosity, asked timidly, his hand trembling in the grasp of his best friend,

"Colonel, how did you fix it?"

"Never mind, Picky. Put your trust in Ferguson, an' he'll fetch you through, if it's in th' cards."

Then Pickens clasped his friend's hand tighter and felt secure. Shortly after they reached the Colonel's office, a boy from the hotel came running in to say that DeLancey had found his money. It seems that, having been under the influence of liquor the night before, he had put the money in a drawer and forgotten about it. The boy then handed Pickens his twenty-dollar gold-piece, and the Colonel, grasping Pickens's hand, danced about the room.

"I'm out of a job, I reckon," said Pickens, presently.

"You shan't work fer that outfit no longer. They had

ought ter have sent you a written apology. Say, how'd you like ter run on th' railroad?" said the Colonel.

"What doin'?"

"Peanuts."

"Boss."

"Well, I'll run down ter Denver to-morrer an' see."

As Pickens lay that night on a buffalo-robe in the Colonel's office, he dreamed of being in business for himself, and of carrying a cane, and — well, acting very much like Col. Ferguson. While he was sleeping, Wildman called and told the Colonel about the trip to the ranch, and of Miss Bardsley's enthusiasm for ranch life.

"By the way," said he, "I wish I could sell the confounded place. I'm sick and tired of it — a sandstorm gives me the blues for a week."

"Better see Ferguson; he can sell it fer you," suggested the Colonel with a sly twinkle.

"Tell you what I'll do, Goldy: if you'll sell that ranch for me I'll not only give you the usual commission, but I'll make you a present of this kohinoor I got of you."

"Do it on one condition, Joe."

"Name it."

"I'm ter wear th' stone while a-workin' up th' deal. Fact is, since you've had Jumbo, I feel like a locomotive without a headlight."

"All right," said Wildman, unfastening the diamond and handing it to the Colonel.

"Besides," continued the Colonel, placing the blazing pin in his ample shirt-front, "when it's in my showcase here folks think I'm thrifty — feel so myself; an' folks is like flies — they swarm round th' bar'l that 'pears ter have th' most sweetenin'."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE PASSING OF PICKENS.

ONE pleasant day, Madame Montchaveux, Clarisse, and their maid were seated on the long benches beneath the awnings of the railway station, waiting to take the train. Upon this occasion, Joe Wildman, having checked their trunks and otherwise made himself useful, received a cordial invitation to run up to Glenwood Springs during the hot weather, though it is never uncomfortably warm at Cameo Springs.

Presently the train came in, and during the bustle incident to a number of outgoing passengers hurrying to get on while an equally large number were endeavoring to get off, — all by the same platform, — Clarisse stopped on the step to say “Good-by” to Wildman, and, after the manner of some more experienced women travelers, to reiterate something about writing. Meantime, Madame Montchaveux had entered the sleeping-car, had pressed an electric button, and was giving directions to the porter concerning the disposition of her “luggage” in a way that tended to make the other passengers aware of the presence in section 12 of a personage of some importance.

After the last passenger had brushed by Clarisse and it was yet a few seconds before leaving-time, she stood talking to Wildman.

“I want to tell you, Joe, that you were the only fellow here that understood me, and I wouldn’t give you for the rest of the whole outfit.” She said this with such earnest-

ness that Wildman could not have doubted her sincerity even had he been so disposed.

"I'm glad that you think so," he said, a tinge of color coming into his sun-browned and honest face.

"I'm going to give you something to remember me by, Joe," she said with a smile, and, coming closer, she reached her two little hands up and pulled down his face to within easy reach of her lips, and ——

"Say, Clarisse, can't you pass 'em around?" called a voice. It was Col. Ferguson, valise in hand and nearly out of breath. With quick wit Clarisse said to Wildman as she let go of his arm,

"Cousin Joe, don't forget to write."

This may have relieved the minds of the bystanders as to the propriety of the proposed transaction, but it did not suffice for the Colonel, who called out:

"Don't see why your uncle Golden shouldn't be in it as well as your 'Cousin Joe.'" As he said this the Colonel put one foot on the lower step in order that he might be the very last one to get on, for he never liked to waste any time on the cars. But Clarisse did not kiss the Colonel then, perhaps because he explained that he was going with her as far as Divide, and that he would see that she should have a chance to do so when he should get off.

Wildman in embarrassment turned away, and was greeted by Harris, the conductor, who with a mischievous twinkle said:

"Hello, 'Cousin Joe'! How are you? Come on up to the engine with me."

Wildman, still blushing as a girl might have, went with him. Harris handed the engineer his running orders, com-

pared watches with him, and then he and Wildman walked back to where a woman and a little boy stood, the former holding a basket covered with a snow-white napkin.

"Julia, this is my friend, Joe Wildman,—I sometimes call him 'Cousin Joe.' Mr. Wildman, this is my wife, and this chap is the general manager of our home; isn't he, wife?" And the sturdy conductor grabbed up the child, held him aloft in loving admiration for a second, and kissed both of his ruddy little cheeks. In anticipation of what was in store for the wife, Wildman politely stepped aside, but he heard her say, "There's not much for your lunch, dear, but I'll try to do better next —"

"There, there!" said Harris, "not another word; it's better than I deserve; there's the love of a good wife for sauce, and that makes any lunch fit for a king." Then kissing his wife tenderly he took the basket, called in a loud clear voice, "A-l-l a-b-o-a-r-d!" signaled to the engineer, and turned to Wildman.

"Just wanted to say," said Wildman hurriedly, "to take good care of the folks in section 12."

"All right, 'Cousin,'" came back as the conductor swung himself on to the steps of the moving train.

Wildman stood watching a slight figure waving a handkerchief from the rear platform till the train darted into a black hole in the side of the mountain, and again when it emerged and swung round the curve and over the high iron bridge and on to the next tunnel, where finally it was lost to view and left only a trail of black smoke that hung like a pall against the side of the mountain. Turning to Mrs. Harris, who had also been watching the train, he said:

"Do you know there is something uncanny to me about

a train running at full speed into one of those dismal tunnels?"

"And to me, too," she said, brushing tears from her eyes; "and there's so many of them on this road. I don't suppose I'll ever get over the feeling I have every time I come here, that it may be the last time I may see my husband alive,—though I don't let him know it unless he reads it in my face, as sometimes I think he does."

In the tenderness of his heart, Wildman now regretted having said anything about tunnels, tried to cheer up the woman, gave the boy some money for candy, and then went away. As he walked back to the hotel he thought of Clarisse's words, of the kiss that would have been his but for the untimely interruption, and of the beautiful picture she made as she stood waving her little hand to him.

Reaching the hotel, the first person he met was DeLancey, who, to satisfy an idle curiosity, asked,

"Where have you been?"

"To the depot to see some friends off," answered Wildman.

"They say the Montchaveux people have suddenly left."

"They have gone, but not suddenly."

"I'm deuced glad of it."

"Why?"

"I never saw such a piece of impertinence — aw — as that Clarisse is," said DeLancey, sneeringly.

"If you think so you just keep your opinion to yourself, will you?" returned Wildman, hotly.

"What is it to you what I do?" retorted DeLancey; and adding, "I think she is a —"

"Don't you say it!" cried Wildman, drawing closer.

DeLancey, with the insolence characteristic of fellows of his stamp which dares to provoke the wrath of larger and better men on the assumption that they are too magnanimous to resent it by acts of violence, seemed to puff up as he came nearer, and cried,

“I will say it. She is —”

Before he could finish the sentence, Wildman struck him a powerful blow which sent him sprawling upon the ground, and he was choking and pounding him when he felt a gentle touch on his arm, and his name pronounced in a woman's voice caused him to look up. There stood Agnes Hargrave!

“I — I beg your pardon, Miss Hargrave,” said Wildman, “but I just couldn't help it. I'll not permit any man to say aught against the girl I — against any lady of my acquaintance.” And he loosened his grasp of DeLancey's throat, but not, however, till he had exacted a promise never again to mention Clarisse's name.

A little later the whole village was startled by the report that the train which had but recently left had collided with another near the long tunnel; and, as the news spread from mouth to mouth, the direfulness of the disaster was magnified, and the greatest excitement prevailed. Men were dispatched in every direction for help, and in a short time scores were hurrying afoot and on horseback and in wagons to the scene of the wreck.

Wildman, riding a swift pony, was the first to arrive. As he drew near he saw Clarisse bending over the prostrate form of a man. He was quickly by her side, and would have embraced her in the ecstasy of his joy at finding her unhurt, had she not turned and said,

“Joe, have you any stimulants with you?”

“Yes, here. My God, it’s Harris!” exclaimed Wildman, handing her a bottle of brandy with which he had thoughtfully provided himself.

“Will he die?” whispered Wildman to the kneeling girl as she raised the conductor’s head and attempted to give him the brandy.

“Don’t lose your head,” said Clarisse coolly. “Now, take hold here and help me to carry him into the sleeper, then I’ll tell you what else to do.”

When they had made the poor fellow as comfortable as possible, Wildman asked after Madame Montchaveux and the maid, and was told that they were uninjured. The Madame was in the drawing-room, and in hysterics.

Soon the surgeons and others came and the work of relief for the injured was under way. It was found that none of the passengers had been killed, and but few were seriously injured. When Wildman found time to examine the wreck his attention was attracted to a group of passengers gathered round a man seated on a boulder, a cane under his left arm, a cigar between his teeth, and busy filling out certificates and tearing them from a small book that rested on his knee.

“Three thousand dollars fer th’ small sum of twenty-five cents — two bits — a day of twenty-four hours! Remember, gents, that th’ unexpected always happens in Colorado! Now, who’s th’ next lucky man? Don’t all speak at once — yes, sir — thank you — five dollars — it pays fer twenty days — twenty — give me th’ name of th’ lucky woman you want it paid to when you ’re killed — maybe before night — can’t tell — case of doubt take th’ safe side —

git insured, gents, an' you're most sure not ter git a scratch. That's right!"

It was the ubiquitous Colonel, and he was doing a thriving business in accident insurance. He soon put the stub-book in his pocket, looked at his watch—not so much to inform himself of the time as from force of habit—gave his cane a twirl, and walked away arm-in-arm with Wildman.

"It's well ter go loaded out here—no tellin' what's a-goin' ter happen," explained the Colonel. "You see, Joe, I hain't no good at all at helpin' care fer th' sufferin'—breaks me all up so—an' so I said ter Clarisse when th' jolt come fer her ter go in an' do whatever she could, an' I'd rustle out an' relieve distress in whatever way I could. Twelve dollars hain't so bad, considerin' th' size of th' wreck, is it?"

They had not gone far till they came upon Dr. Eisler, who was bending over the form of a boy. Ferguson held back, but Wildman went nearer, and then beckoned to him to come. The Colonel screwed his courage up to the sticking-point and tremblingly went.

"My God! It's Picky!" he exclaimed, kneeling by the little fellow's side. Pickens had been on the east-bound train on the return trip of his first "run."

"Picky!" cried the Colonel, smoothing the lad's hair, "Picky, you're not much hurt, air you? Picky, say, Picky, don't you know me, Picky? Don't you?" There was a faint smile of recognition and a feeble movement of the lips, but he could not speak.

"Save him, Doctor! Save him, an' I'll give you all th' minin' stocks I've got, an' my diamond pin, an—"

The doctor shook his head and said in a low tone, "The poor little fellow is — dead!"

The Colonel gave way to his emotions in a manner that showed the depth of his great grief, and, sobbing as though his heart would break, was gently led away by Wildman.

"I loved him," sobbed the Colonel, leaning heavily upon the strong arm of his friend.

"I know it," said Wildman sympathetically.

Presently Dr. Eisler came up, and Ferguson, taking him aside, said:

"Doc., here's a little money. Give it ter th' feller you think needs it most — jest shove it in his pocket an' say nothin' ter nobody." It was the full amount of his commissions, and every cent the Colonel had.

Upon reaching town, Ferguson went direct to Uncle Israel Goodman's for the solace he felt so much in need of, and when he bade the old man good-by his heart was filled with new hope, and his mind was occupied with thoughts of the comfort the large bouquet which Uncle Israel had given him would bring to poor Jack Harris. But he somehow did not feel that he could take it himself; so he hired a boy and told him to hand it in, and if anyone asked where it came from to say that Uncle Israel had sent it.

Meanwhile, Wildman had taken charge of little Pickens's remains, and carefully sewed in the corner of a pocket was found the twenty-dollar gold-piece which the little fellow had been saving for the new suit of clothes; and it was sacredly devoted to the purpose for which it had been given him.

In a few days Clarisse received a letter from a girl

friend giving a graphic account of a fight she had witnessed, wherein DeLancey suffered an inglorious defeat. Thereupon she sat down and penned the following:

GLENWOOD SPRINGS, COLO.

Friday Eve.

MY DEAR FRIEND: I have just heard, Joe, about how you did up that smart Aleck from Boston, and I just can't ever, no, never, tell you how ever and ever so much obliged to you ma and me are. We both want you to come up here as soon as ever you can, to visit us. Please do. We will take our guns and go out and kill a mountain lion. Is not that enough inducement to fetch you?

We have just heard that that nice conductor has died. Poor fellow! I wish that you would get this check for fifty dollars cashed and give it to his wife, but be sure and not tell her who sent it. I am ashamed to send so little, but it's all I have of my very own at the present.

We will look for you sure next Sunday. Give my love to Uncle Goldy. *Au revoir.*

CLARISSE.

P. S.—If you're jealous of Uncle Goldy, you can keep some for yourself. *Sabe?*

CHAPTER XVII.

EARNING A WEEK'S BOARD.

ONE evening Ferguson and Wildman were seated in the former's office, earnestly discussing the business situation. Though few knew of it, the fact was that Wildman was working for the Colonel on commission, it being his duty to loiter about the hotels, keep his eyes and ears open, say a good word now and then for Oro Grande and the Colonel, and to report daily.

"I see," said the Colonel, "by th' tie you have on, that it's Friday. My board's due to-morrer. Wish whoever made th' weeks had chucked about twice as many days into 'em, so a feller could turn round."

"I don't; I wish the weeks were only half as long," replied Wildman.

"Oh, of course, you do; but they'll be short enough when Clarisse gits back. What?"

Wildman blushed, but made no reply, and the Colonel proceeded:

"Joe, we've got ter rustle harder; got ter git a push on ourselves. I had ter borry th' money fer Picky's funeral. Glad ter do it, but seems as though nobody oughter be that hard up with all th' bloomin' propersitions there is lyin' round loose."

The Colonel here lit a fresh cigar, and in deep meditation paced the floor. Finally, taking down a stock-certificate book, he busied himself with filling in some blanks. Signing his name with a flourish, he remarked:

"There, I've sloughed off ter Mrs. Jack Harris ten thousand shares of th' Wild Goose Mammoth Consolated Minin', Millin' an' Development Company—face value ten thousand dollars, full-paid, an' non-assessable!"

Wildman smiled and said,

"Goldy, you wouldn't give her that, would you?"

"What's th' use in bein' miser-stingy? There's a plenty left. Mebbe 't will make life go sorter easy fer th' widder ter have somethin' purty ter look at an' hope fer. Nothin' like hope, Joseph—nothin' like hope, 'less it is ter cash in. If she don't want ter frame it, she can paste it over a crack ter keep th' cold winds out, like that old prospector up in Leadville did who afterwards had a devil of a time a-steamin' it off so he could git it ter sell fer forty thousand dollars. Gosh! Don't you wish this here aurif'rous old certif. might turn out like that? Gee whiz!"

"Goldy, were you ever in love?" asked Wildman, irrelevantly.

"Never had no time fer foolishness; always had ter rustle; an' in my private opinion, publicly expressed, a good, live rustler makes a darned poor lover, an' *vice versus*. From th' bus'nis you've been a-doin' lately, my boy, I wouldn't be a little bit s'prised if that's what's th' matter with *you*."

Wildman colored, but kept to his subject.

"Perhaps, Goldy, you'll strike it rich some day and—"

"Then," broke in the Colonel, "'t will be too late. Ferguson is a-gittin' old, an', between me an' you, he'd ruther trot th' race out single 'n ter be th' husband of any

woman jest fer his money; he's seen too much of that kind of bus'nis — most always winds up with a big bill fer alimoney."

"But she might marry you for yourself. You're not bad-looking, and I fancy that if some charmer were to find out what a good husband you'd make she might —"

"Don't taffy me, Joe. I own up that I've been threatened with it in a mild form once or twice, but never got clear down. I don't make no brags, fer I've seen fellers do that an' repent. If I ever do git it, you'll know it — can always tell when a feller's in love."

"How?"

"Easy. When a feller who's been one of th' boys begins ter herd ter himself, you can bet there's calico somewhere round that he wouldn't swap fer an undivided half int'rest in Paradise. Thet's gospel!"

The Colonel took a fresh cigar, and resumed:

"But I reckon Ferguson hain't no call ter worry, fer there's no woman a-pinin' her sweet life away fer th' like of him."

"Oh, go along, Goldy; there's many a worse-looking fellow than you are, and older, too, who marries and is very happy," said Wildman encouragingly, and adding, "Say, why don't you propose to Mrs. Boylston?"

"Me?" laughed the Colonel, as if the suggestion were very ludicrous. "Never done such a thing in my whole life. Geewhistifers! Jest 'magine Ferguson a-doin' *that!*"

"I didn't suppose you ever had proposed; but that should make no difference. It's never too late to mend."

"But s'posin' she'd be fool enough ter take me up;

then where'd Ferguson be? In a devil of a fix, wouldn't he?"

"Why, it strikes me he'd be pretty well fixed — financially."

"You wouldn't; would you, Joe?"

"Oh, a fellow can never say what he'd do if he were the other fellow. There's lots worse-looking women than she is."

"Mebbe so, but me an' her don't use th' same grammar an' dictionary."

"She might teach you hers. A woman will do a great deal for the man she loves."

"She will? How do you know?"

"Well, that's what they say."

"S'posin' all you say was correct, don't th' law say that you can't stake a claim 'less upon unoccupied an' unappropriated ground? Strikes me th' same rule 'ud hold in gittin' married — have ter find an unoccupied an' unappropriated heart."

"I think, so far as that's concerned, she'd be all right."

"Hain't so sure 'bout that. Don't want no abandoned claim — don't want no question of priorities a-comin' up hereafter."

"Why, her husband is dead; isn't he?"

"I hear she's a grass."

"Oh, I see. Well, you must remember that old adage about the fish that are yet in the sea."

The Colonel shook his head, and Wildman changed the subject slightly by asking him what his idea of true happiness was, to which he replied:

"Owe nobody nothin', an' have nobody owe me nothin',

an' live at a first-class hotel an' smoke imported cigars, an' have five or six dogs, a shotgun, an' a kid or two 'round ter help enjoy th' fun."

Wildman smiled, and the Colonel then asked him what he would do were he to "strike it rich," and the former went on to give some very beautiful ideas of his in regard to ameliorating the sufferings of mankind, to which the Colonel listened with marked attention. But Ferguson's mind never wandered far from business, and so, presently, he said,

"Joe, have you found any float lately?"

"Nothing, unless it's that dude that I whipped, and I presume that I'm done for with him."

"That's all right. Ruther know that alecky feller had been well licked than ter have made him a sale. I'll see after him myself. Must strike a pay streak mighty quick. How's that Morton? Think he's country rock?"

"Afraid so."

"Well, the old man'll see what he can do ter-morrer."

"Goldy, what do you honestly think of Oro Grande?"

"She's an aurif'rous hummer. Millions in her, millions! She'll be in it long after th' other camps that hain't born yet air dead, buried, an' fergot. Wildcat an' Jim Crow companies will hurt her, but, mark my feeble words, she'll come up agin th' most bloomin' high-grade gold camp on this or any other footstool. Stuff is there, an' if I was offered this holy minute a cold five hundred thousand fer my prospects up there I'd consider it a down-right insult. That's right! But, say, Joe, that's neither here nor there. Lend me a couple of dollars till I see you agin; can you? Thanks. I'll pay you next someday."

Wildman started to go, but the Colonel called to him.

"What do you say ter our havin' a little game of five-cent ante?"

"No objections," said Wildman, drawing up to the table.

"Aunt Rebecca is down on cards," said the Colonel, giving the deck a dexterous shuffle. "She says gamblin' is a most terrible vice. What do you think I told her? Told her I'd saw off."

"Well, why don't you, then?"

"Didn't say jest *when* I'd begin; an' besides, had no idea I'd be forced ter play jest to earn an honest penny ter pay board with."

During the game the question of honesty came up, and the Colonel thus delivered himself:

"Honesty, Joe, is right, an' pays, 'ceptin', as a matter of course, in poker, where you've jest got ter *do* 'em!"

When the game was finished the Colonel was in the best of spirits, and presumably had "earned" enough to pay for a week's board.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A NIGHT OFF.

COL. FERGUSON'S office door stood wide open. In the display cases might have been seen huge chunks of ore, tagged to show the names of the mines, assays, *etc.*—the most glistening specimens carelessly occupying conspicuous places. A couple of chairs, a desk, a table upon which were the daily papers, and a blackboard with chalk-written quotations of mining stocks, constituted the main furnishings. Morton was in consultation with the proprietor.

"Th' perticular thing," the Colonel was saying, "that I wanted ter call ter your attention is gone—went like griddle-cakes of a frosty mornin'. My! but you could have done mighty well—forty ter one or more—if you'd only been quick."

"Is that so?" queried Morton, regretfully.

"But we've somethin' jest as good," suggested the Colonel.

"Is that possible?"

"Yes, sir-ee; an' th' great beauty of it is that it don't take no scads ter handle it. It's no wildcat scheme, no Pan-American pop'lar-priced, dry-washin', placer propersition, no Honduras Mahogany and Rubber Tree bus'nis; nothin' visionary 'bout it. She's all-wool-an'-a-yard-wide, an' there's thousands in it, thousands! An' th' feller who takes his profits of thousands is bound in time ter be a bloated millionaire," the Colonel ran on enthusiastically,

punctuating his speech with sly winks well calculated to impress his hearer with the importance and the secrecy of the proposition about to be unfolded.

"What is it?" asked Morton.

"You see, th' excitement is on big now up at th' camp — unnecessary ter tell you, a Western man, why: you know all 'bout demonitizin' of silver bus'nis an' what it means fer gold — appreciates her, you know — an' Oro Grande is all gold. *Sabe?*"

"Yes, but —"

"Listen to me, Morton. Now, I happen ter know of a splendid chance ter git an option on an extension — an extension, mark you — on one of th' best an' biggest mines up there. Can git it fer a song — 'bout ten thousand dollars, an' it's cheap as dirt — alkali dirt!"

"Yes, but Colonel —"

"Hush! Wait till I tell you. We organize a little syndicate, git a ninety-day option, an' — Reckon you could put up th' money if you could have a big enough int'rest, hey?"

"I presume that I could, if —"

"Exactly, if th' scheme struck you as a sound bus'nis propersition. Now, listen. We secure th' option, begin work, git out assays, organize a corporation, — call it, say, The Last Chance Extension Mining Company, Limited, with a capital of \$5,000,000, divided into shares of one dollar each; git out dandy, bright red-an'-blue prospectuses, an' throw her wide open fer subscriptions, an' sell shares fer one cent each — a feller always likes ter have lots of shares fer his money — an' then we turn our option over ter th' company fer one-third of it's stock, keep one-third

in th' treasury, an' sell one-third to th' hungry public. No trouble at all ter sell it. Then, out of th' monéy, we develop th' property, an' before th' last payment becomes due on her we'll be a-shovin' th' ore ter mill ter beat th' band. Within six months she'll be a-payin' th' biggest kind of dividends or Ferguson will eat his hat. Yes, sir!"

Though Ferguson had the utmost confidence in the proposed transaction, Morton, being a very cautious fellow, was not favorably impressed. He fancied that he detected evidences, if not of fraud, certainly of an intention to dispose of a property without much regard to its real merit, the sole object being—so it seemed to him—to make an immediate sale at a good profit. And so he said that he would think the matter over. As he went out he met DeLancey coming in.

Ferguson then took the new-comer in hand, and, when he had done with the details of the scheme, DeLancey said,

"Suppose that—ah—we should miss it?"

"It's frosty weather when Ferguson gits left; but if we should, we'll touch earth agin, knuckle down, sing 'I'll be Gay an' Happy Still,' cinch up our bellybands, an' go after another propersition that'll make th' old Standard Oil gang th' color of grass. That's what we shore will. But, Cap'n, we jest can't miss it on this layout. It's th' oppertunity of your life, an' Miss Oppertunity has ter be proposed ter when she's in th' notion; she's as coy as a coyote. It's th' smart, slick feller like you, Cap'n, that makes his wad while th' other feller's a-tryin' ter make up his mind."

"We Bostonians don't often — ah — allow others to outwit us."

"No, you can bet you don't. God didn't make a Yankee jest ter be a-doin'. Have a fresh Perfecto, Cap'n; a good weed helps a feller a heap when he's considerin' a business propersition." And the Colonel offered the young man a cigar and then a lighted match.

"We mustn't say a word about this till we —"

"Glad ter hear you say 'we,' Cap'n," broke in the Colonel, slapping his visitor on the shoulder. "Want you in it. You've got th' nerve, sir. There's millions in it! Millions, sir!"

— "till we can see what we — aw — we can do," finished DeLancey, realizing that he could do nothing unless he could induce his father to help him.

"Why, conscience alive! A feller of your means 'ud be a big fool not ter put up th' whole amount himself. Mebbe your Nevada soap-mine deal alone would help you ter pay out. It's a mere trifle," said the Colonel, an observation that made the young man loth to admit that it was impossible for him at once to furnish the needed amount. As he was slow to say just what he could or would do, Ferguson remarked:

"If you don't want in on that plan, cap'n, you'd better take some stock anyhow. A penny saved is as good as a dollar lost. You can buy one hundred thousand shares fer one thousand dollars. Jest think of it! Purty soon, when your stock goes up an' reaches par, you've made \$99,000. That's equal ter \$3,000 a year fer thirty-three years, or \$9,000 a year fer 'leven, ter say nothin' of dividends. With an income like that, sir, you'd have no call ter be

miserable lonesome, for th' girls 'ud flock 'round you like flies 'round a sugar-bar'l in August. Figger it out fer yourself. Figgers don't lie, though they do sometimes stagger one like the devil."

"How much time have we?" asked DeLancey.

"Time, tide an' taxes waits fer no man. Must pick peaches when they're ripe, or th' hogs'll git 'em. Say, you've heard of th' Montchaveux people who made their millions out of mines? Well, sir, that young girl, Clarisse, is their dead-shot mascot, an' she was in here several times before they went away. Looked at my samples, too," observed the Colonel, adding with a sly wink, "The old Senator may be here *any* day an' buy th' whole shootin'-match, if no feller smarter than him gits in ahead. 'First come, first served,' is my motto."

This had the desired effect. DeLancey made up his mind to head off the avaricious Senator, and to show him that a shrewd Yankee cannot be easily outwitted. The Colonel then permitted the young man the pleasure of slobbering on his shoulder.

"Old man," said DeLancey, his arm affectionately round Ferguson's neck, "do you think our mine will beat the Independence?"

"She'd oughter double-discount anything on Fightin' Mountain. Can't tell, but she has th' chance," answered the Colonel, his manner, perhaps, conveying more than his words, and so inflaming DeLancey's imagination that he at once invited him to go and help "rubricate the town."

By this time the Colonel had made up his mind that DeLancey, however willing he might be to invest, did not

have the money, and so he would not waste much ammunition on him. Still, the fellow might have influence which could be turned to account; therefore, in the exuberancy of a seeming good-fellowship, he accepted the invitation, and the two started out.

To drink with the convivially inclined until they were quite too full and yet to remain surprisingly sober himself, was an accomplishment on which the Colonel prided himself; he also took a certain pride in the fact that he was never in his life intoxicated, which is more of a compliment than, on its face, may at first seem.

Before DeLancey had more than fairly started, he became very talkative, and told all, if not more, than he knew about Mrs. Boylston's financial affairs, and assured his companion that, by reason of his long acquaintance with her, it would be no trouble at all for him to interest her in the mining venture. Accordingly, he proposed seeing her and telling her that he had made a snug sum, thereby exciting her cupidity, and then to say that he had had a block of the stock in the new company reserved for her. To the latter suggestion the Colonel was amiably non-committal, but to the former he entered a vigorous protest, for he said he hated "a lie worse 'n cold pizen."

They had been seated a while at a round table on which were now a couple of half-filled glasses, when the Colonel to break a momentary drowsiness said:

"By th' way, Cap'n, what was your name where you come from?"

"I'll have you know, sir, that DeLancey is a very respectable name. It has never been changed, and, by Jove, it never will be! We twace our ancest(hic)wy back

to the — what was the name of the bloody boat? — the — the Mayflower,” answered DeLancey with a show of heat.

“Must be in th’ herd-book then. Hey? Didn’t mean ter decompose you, cap’n,” laughed the Colonel, adding, “Some changes fer one reason an’ some fer another. Names is like some rocks — metamorphic. Now, fer instance, I may have changed mine, but what does that signify so long as Golden S. Ferguson goes at th’ bank? An onion by any other name ’ud smell as strong, as th’ feller said. Well, take another on me.”

DeLancey tipped off another glass at the Colonel’s expense (the latter seldom allowed a companion to pay for anything), and the Colonel resumed:

“Cap’n, you’re th’ highest roller I’ve met up with in many moons. Fact! You’ve a fine, non-explosive, double-riveted boiler, an’ you’ll live ter be a centurion, if you don’t die too soon. A feller though wants ter be a trifle careful not ter let his hankerin’ thirst become chronic. Always shut off steam an’ sling on th’ brakes when you’re goin’ down hill. That’s gospel!” And so he ran on glibly till he had not only pacified the young man, but had again brought him to terms of maudlin intimacy. Then DeLancey dozed a while, and the Colonel quietly puffed at a cigar.

Presently DeLancey rubbed his eyes and looked at the imperturbable features of the Colonel, and then for a while he seemed lost in a stupid contemplation of some very deep problem, from which he at length roused himself languidly to ask:

“I say, old man, what would you advise an Eastern chap — a fellow with a college edu(hic)cation who has

seen the world, you know, and is deuced tired of the — aw — thing, to do?"

"He wants ter squat right down here an' stay. Where there's bees there's honey! Stick closer 'n a brother ter Oro Grande an' you'll be a rich man, sir! Oppertunity don't often make a second call. She's coy. Two birds in th' hand is worth more 'n one in th' sage-brush! In a year or so you can go back ter th' old gent an' say, like th' copy-book used ter, '*Venus, vidi, visus.*' Them words is Latin, an' th' gov'nor may have forgot their interpretation. Tell him that Ferguson says they mean: *I went ter Colorado; I saw a good thing; I took it in!*"

In due time the Colonel tucked DeLancey in bed, and the latter voted the former a "deucedly good fellow." Then the Colonel went his way, soberly wondering how he could get even with the fellow for his treatment of poor little Pickens. As he was hurrying along whistling softly to himself, he noticed a light in Dr. Eisler's office, and, though then quite late, he groped his way up the dark stairway and rapped on the Doctor's door. Eisler had fallen asleep, but was presently wakened by the loud knocking, and came, rubbing his eyes, to the door.

"What's the matter?" he asked, yawning.

"Oh, I was jest a-passin' by an' saw a light an' thought I'd run up an' chin you a bit," answered the Colonel, helping himself to a seat. The Doctor did not acknowledge the compliment, and, in truth, showed some displeasure at the unseemly intrusion; but he was soon in a good humor.

"Doc., I see there's a new fad in your line. Got onto it yet? — th' healin' of th' sick by música?"

"Oh, that's not new. The power of music to soothe is so universally known as to have expression in an adage. Recently it has, however, been scientifically determined that music has the power to heal."

"Tell me about it," urged the Colonel.

"Well, several years ago the St. Cecilia society was organized in London to test the effect of sound vibrations upon certain forms of nervous disorder. Its membership consisted of physicians and skilled musicians—the one class to direct, the other to execute. The success of the experiment is well authenticated. I have, myself, observed that music acts in a marked way upon certain forms of disease—insomnia, for instance."

"Yes, you're mighty right,—it does put folks ter sleep sometimes; but hain't you likewise noticed that th' same is true of some preachin'?"

"You're a nice one to talk about sermons! How long has it been since you heard one?"

"Hear one ev'ry Easter. But see here, Doc., tell me what you really think of that music propersition, fer if it's what I think it is, I've an idea ter suggest."

"About all I can say is that it's quite within the range of probability that there are great, and, at present, not well understood forces in music which may ultimately be utilized for the relief of suffering humanity. You, yourself, must have observed how lively music dispels despondency. As a colonel," there was a touch of sarcasm in the doctor's voice that failed of its intended effect, "you must know how inspiriting an influence martial music is under certain circumstances. You have seen your regiment stirred to renewed effort, their flagging spirits cheered, and vic-

tory even wrested from the jaws of defeat by the band striking up Yankee Doodle, or Marching Through Georgia."

The Doctor looked sharply at the Colonel, but the latter simply nodded an assent. His mind seemed to be in retrospect, as though the scenes of sanguinary conflict were being lived over again,—and that, of course, to an old hero, is no time for mere words.

"Well, now," the Doctor went on, "all this simply goes to show that sound vibrations act directly upon the nerves; that's the whole thing in a nutshell."

"Then," said the Colonel, a thumb in either arm-hole of his vest, "you jest keep an eagle eye on that St. Cecilia bus'nis, an' when she's ripe — when folks gits ter thinkin' that nothin' but music will do fer their spells — send fer me, an' me an' you will organize a syndicate."

"A syndicate!" exclaimed the Doctor in evident surprise; though why he should have been surprised is hard to conjecture, for he should have known the Colonel well enough to understand that his fertile brain was always hatching out some money-making scheme for the use of that combination of capital called the syndicate.

"Yes, sir; a big syndicate! There'd be millions in it. Call it, say, The Great American St. Cecilia Society, Limited! Then corner all th' music an' musicians. 'T won't take so awful much money—most musicians come cheap—don't have ter buy 'em at what they think they're worth; an' then we can 'stablish branch sanitanoriums all over th' country, like they used ter with skatin' rinks, an' they can pay th' papa company — that's me an' you — so much a head royalty. See?"

"Great scheme," laughed the Doctor.

"Bet your life it's great. Cart-load of money in it, too. We'd soon be multos, ride in autos, and have our photos in th' papers. Why, you've no idea how many folks there is who'd suddenly become alarmin'ly sick with nervous prostration an' th' like."

"Am afraid you're too sanguine," commented the Doctor.

"Not a bit of it! Not a bit of it! I tell you, Doc., I've made a study of these American people, an' they're dead ready—th' rich ones; we don't care a —— fer th' poor ones—ter have any respectable disease as soon as it becomes fashionable. A rich man likes nothin' better 'n to have his doctor tell him he's overworked, an' must take a lay-off."

"Oh, pshaw!" exclaimed the Doctor.

"Fact! Why, Doc., don't you see th' medicine 'ud be so pleasant ter take that you couldn't build an' rent houses fast enough ter hold your women patients alone, ter say nothin' of th' men. They'd be willin' ter pay big prices, too; see what they pay now ter hear a frowzle-top foreigner bang on th' piany. What wouldn't they give if they had a doctor's perscription requirin' 'em ter take such stuff three times a day, either before or after meals. What?"

The Doctor yawned, and said something to the effect of his seeing about it; and the Colonel, picking up his hat, said:

"By th' way, how's your eye fad a-comin' on? Notice that Boston girl wears your brand of glasses." Then, lowering his voice, he said in a confidential tone, "Doc., let me give you a pointer. Quit a-foolin' with your hi-falutin' fad, an' buy a ranch."

“What on earth would I do with a ranch?”

“’T wouldn’t be no fifth wheel. A certain Eastern girl is dead struck on ranch life. Ketch me now? Ferguson is th’ exclusive an’ sole agent fer *the* one that ’ud make her everlastin’ly an’ eternally happy.”

“Oh, get out!”

“Fact! Better take Ferguson’s advice. Wildman is willin’ ter sell. Guess, mebbe, he wants ter leave th’ country.”

Ferguson had scarcely reached the street before Dr. Eisler found himself thinking about ranch life and the freedom which it affords. He easily persuaded himself that he needed rest, and, coupled with his dream, there was an enchanting face that would keep such a life from becoming tiresome and dull. And so he made up his mind quietly to find out the price of the Wildman ranch. But why the Wildman place? There were others which might be bought, and probably for less money; but somehow he could think of none save the one that had appealed to the fancy of Madge Bardsley.

CHAPTER XIX.

AN INVESTIGATION.

TWO AMBITIONS had Mrs. Boylston: one, to avenge herself on Madge Bardsley's father for breaking his promise of marriage; the other, to add to her fortune, although it was already sufficiently large for a person of reasonable desires. She now had under consideration a certain investment, which, should half promised of it come true, would very materially enlarge the credit side of her bank account. It was with reference to this investment that the following conversations were had:

"Have you ever heard of the Last-Something-or-Other-Limited-Mining Company?" asked Mrs. Boylston of Morton one day after she had in a measure established herself in his regard by the various arts known to women of her age, disposition, and experience.

"I think not, Mrs. Boylston," he replied.

"That's strange. I am told by a friend that it is really wonderful — assays away up in the hundreds of dollars to the pound, or maybe it was to the ton."

"Indeed! Where is it located?"

"Oh, of course, in that El Dorado of El Doradoes, Oro Grande."

"Why, it's strange we have not seen something of this in the newspapers."

"Oh, it's been kept very quiet, I think. Some speculators, perhaps, wish quietly to buy up all of the stock."

"What did you say the name was?"

"Why, I don't know as I really ought to tell, but Mr. Morton, you'll not let it go any further, I am sure. It's the — pshaw! now I saw one of the certificates, but I can't think of the name. It's something about the extension of the Last Chance, or the Final Opportunity, and there is a picture of a miner with a lamp in his hat and a pick in his hand, and there is a whole wheelbarrowful of rich gold ore, and —"

"Pardon me, have you seen the assay certificates?"

"Yes, indeed, a number of them—the originals—and they are authentic, you know, and they run very high."

"Is the company a Cameo Springs concern with a capital of \$5,000,000, and shares of the par value of \$1 each, and offered at present at one cent a share?"

"Why, Mr. Morton, I see you know all about it, only my friend said that the shares cost two cents each. How many shares did *you* subscribe for, may I ask?"

"None, I'm glad to say. Have you invested in it?"

"Well, no, not exactly; but a block of stock has been reserved for me."

"You haven't paid for it?"

"Not yet — no, sir."

"Then don't."

"Why?"

"Because I think it's a fraud."

"Mr. Morton!"

"You'll be a foolish woman if you do."

"Why, Senator Montchaveux is anxious to buy all of the stock, and you know he made his millions in mines,

and therefore it *must* be a good thing. Come, now, you're prejudiced, aren't you, Mr. Morton?"

Morton smiled at the woman's charming indifference to logic and her rare insistence. Since he showed no disposition to answer her question, she construed his silence into a tacit admission.

"I knew you were prejudiced," she resumed, which caused Morton to laugh outright.

"You can't fool me, you see," said she with an air of pride in her astuteness. And Morton laughed louder.

"Mrs. Boylston, of course I'm prejudiced —"

"There! I knew it all the time," she interrupted, believing that she had now received full confirmation of her suspicion.

"Prejudiced," he continued soberly, "against having anyone throwing away money."

"Mr. Morton!" she exclaimed in astonishment.

"I know what I'm talking about. Just wait and see whether Senator Montchaveux puts in a nickel; if he does, I shan't say another word."

"Mr. Morton, you astonish me. It seemed to me to be a very great opportunity."

"It is a great opportunity — to throw away money."

Morton here saw DeLancey approaching, and withdrew.

"Well," said DeLancey to Mrs. Boylston, as he seated himself by her side, "here I am with that blooming certificate. Thought I'd never be able to get it — such a scwamble. Isn't it handsome?" And he unfolded it to her bewildered eyes.

"You see," he went on, pointing to the paper, "there's your name, and here's the amount — two hundred thou-

sand shares — par value two hundred thousand dollars. 'Full paid and non-assessable': that means that there's no — aw — no liability on your part to pay any more; of course, that's merely formal, for it's weally preposterous to suppose for a minute, don't you know, that such a very rich mine will not yield dividends from the very start. Four thousand dollars is all it costs you, and if you'll kindly write a check payable to my order, I'll go right back, and —"

"It's all very nice, Reginald."

"Finer than silk, as Col. Ferguson says."

"But I don't believe I'll take it."

"What!"

"I say that I don't believe I'll take it."

"Miss such an opportunity as that?"

"Yes, that is what I mean."

"You'll be sorry; weally, you will."

"Perhaps so; but I've made up my mind."

"Mrs. Boylston, you place me in a very awkward position. I hate to take the thing back to the company after telling them that you had authorized me to have it reserved."

"Reginald, I never authorized you to do any such thing. You will remember that you told me first that you had reserved it. You called it 'a great snap.'"

"It is a gweat snap."

"Then there will be others glad to take it, and it will not be so embarrassing for you to return what so many are eager for."

"What in the world has happened to make you change

your mind? You know, Mrs. Boylston, the last time I talked with you, you were weally anxious to get it."

"Since then I have changed my mind. I always investigate every business proposition, and I've investigated this one, and I have learned that the Extension's Last Chance—or whatever its name is—Company is a fraud."

"Who said so?"

"Mr. Morton."

"Oh, ho! I see through it now. He's miffed because he didn't get in himself, don't you know? And, besides, you know that he doesn't like me. He's taken this course to get even. Do you believe him?"

"I do."

"You prefer his word to mine?"

"Well, I think he is an *honest* man."

DeLancey left in a passion, and went direct to headquarters. When he told Col. Ferguson of the result of his interview, the latter laughed as though Mrs. Boylston's decision were quite the best joke he had heard in a long time, and he said that he would go over and see her and "jolly her up a bit."

The Colonel found Mrs. Boylston alone and sunning herself in an easy-chair on the hotel porch. She greeted him with an indifferent "How are you, sir?" to which he responded cheerily:

"Never better, ma'am. Could lick my weight in wildcats; and you—how air you?"

"In good health, sir, I thank you," she answered coolly.

"Declare ter goodness, ma'am, you don't look a day over twenty-five. But then, you always was young-lookin', an' it hain't no great compliment ter tell you that. Recollect

a-askin' when you first come who that stylish an' handsome young lady was."

Mrs. Boylston showed signs of — well, she was a woman.

"Was jest amblin' by an' thought I'd drop in," continued the Colonel, drawing up a chair, "an' see how my friend was a-gettin' along. We've all too few friends in this cruel, cold, spinnin' old planet ter forgit one. An' then, ter think, you'll soon be a-packin' your little grip."

Mrs. Boylston thought she detected a deep regret in the speaker's voice, and she said to herself, "Surely this man has been misrepresented and misunderstood: Aunt Rebecca is probably right; I have acted hastily in condemning him."

"I presume, Colonel, that you often see rare chances for profitable investment in mines?" she queried, expecting to hear him say something about the Last Chance Extension Mining Company, Limited.

"Not often anything I'd advise a lady ter invest in; fact is, there's dead oodles of prospects offered, but few *mines*. Don't need ter tell a lady of your good horse sense th' dif. betwixt a prospect an' a mine."

"But, Colonel, a mine costs so much."

"You're mighty right it does; it's safer, though, ter buy one mine than forty prospects; bet your sweet life it is." This ingenuous statement seemed so inconsistent with chimerical or fraudulent schemes that Mrs. Boylston now felt sure that Aunt Rebecca's opinion of the Colonel scarce needed further confirmation; yet, while she was about it, she might as well make assurance doubly sure.

"Col. Ferguson, have you ever heard of the Extension's Last Chance Limited Mining Company?"

"Must say that's a new one on me; never heard of it, ma'am." This was literally true, but it was a narrow escape for the Colonel, who now smiled blandly and moved restlessly.

"Don't hurry, Colonel, for I wish to ask you to do me a great personal favor. Will you kindly let me know in case you find anything that is 'gilt-edged'?—I believe that is the term you brokers use."

"Shore, ma'am; always glad ter serve th' ladies. Let's see, about what figger?"

"Well, say, about—oh, I don't know. What do you think would be cheap for a mine? You know so much better than I."

"Ferguson may know better'n you what a mine is worth—there's folks good enough ter say that he has a great nose fer such things; but he can't say how much a person's willin' ter pay. He hain't no mind-reader; *sabe?* Mrs. Boylston, there's jest two things fer success in minin'—sand an' silver."

"Sand and silver?"

"Yes'm; you don't quite ketch me; I mean nerve an' money: th' first ter make you go in, and the second ter keep you in after you git started. Minin' is no business fer people with cold feet."

"I suppose that I should tell you about how much I can afford to invest."

"'T would be better, ma'am."

"Well, confidentially—"

"Of course, confidentially; you can trust me; I haven't no wife."

"I have \$35,000 idle in bank which I might invest."

"Well, ma'am, that hain't much, th' way us Colorado fellers looks at things, but I'll tell you now jest what Ferguson can do with it fer you. Have you got a tight hold of th' rope an' your feet firm on th' rim of th' bucket? Well, then, down we go. It's like this: In th' first place, Ferguson don't perfess ter be honestest'n everybody else, but, if he do say it himself, he'll stick to whatever he says to a woman he'll do in a minin' deal till—well, till frost forms on th' brimstone. *Sabe?* 'Secondly,' as th' preacher said, Ferguson happens ter know of a mine—a daisy, a stèm-winder, a perfect Joe Dandy, a high hummer, an aurif'rous gold-perducer from th' grass-roots—she assays out of sight—no flies on her, absolutely none—finer'n fine silk—richer'n rich cream—worth a million if she's worth a red cent, an'—"

"I do declare!" interjected Mrs. Boylston, whose interest was now thoroughly roused.

"Yes'm. She's th' finest body of quartz in place you ever laid eyes on—a true fissure without a fault or a horse—no pockety propersition that's liable ter pinch out, an' no dead work ter speak of. In fact, she's nothin' short of a reg'ler old-fashioned Comstock of a bonanza! No need ter be hifalutin'ly disquisitionous 'bout such a mine—th' bare, simple, stark-naked, God's truth without frills is what you want; besides, Ferguson isn't given ter ravin' where there's no call ter be." And he jauntily twirled the corners of his mustache in a way that indicated an extreme satisfaction. His companion, though evidently impressed, remained silent. Perhaps she found difficulty in keeping up with the Colonel, for he spoke very rapidly.

"A gold propersition," he continued, "is th' purtiest

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thing in th' known world — nothin' finer! Couldn't be. Why? 'Cause you have a fixed market at twenty dollars a ounce fer each an' ev'ry ounce. Comperdition an' trusts can't *do* you. It's th' *ne plus ultimus*, as the feller said of his solid girl. An' this here pertic'lar propersition is *bone fidus*, too, as th' lawyers say. Nothin' better! Can't be! Nature'd bust her mould if she tried ter do better. Fact! There's never two mines alike, jest as there's never two men. You may find a seemin' *fac simerlus* of Ferguson, but he'd not likely have a mole on his left shoulder-blade, a gunshot wound in his right leg — or limb, as some calls it — an' a knife-scar jest an inch from where his heart oughter be. Never!"

"Dear me, what narrow escapes you must have had!"

"Have had a few calls, ma'am, but not so many as some. You see, I carry a heavy line of Accident, an' that's a big pertection. By th' way, ev'ry man an' woman oughter carry at least \$10,000 of Accident; then they're most sure not ter die with their boots on. Air you pertected, ma'am? No? Well, don't percrastinate! Not on you sweet life! Ferguson can write you up, an' it's cheaper 'n dirt! But, we've digressed, as th' preacher said in th' middle of his talk when he told his congergation that th' next Sunday mornin' he'd preach on 'Hell,' an' in th' evenin' on 'Shall we Know each other There?'"

Though Mrs. Boylston may have been somewhat shocked at the closing speech, she did not reprove the Colonel, nor yet did she give him the encouragement he expected; so he prepared to take his leave, or feigned to do so.

"What can it be purchased for?" she asked eagerly.

"It's a queer happenstance, but betwixt me an' you

an' th' gate-post, can git her fer \$35,000 *cash*. She's called th' Holy Moses, an' b'longs ter a friend of mine who's hard up an' forced ter sell out."

"Where is he? Can you see him at once?"

"Could, if necessary. See here, Mrs. B., biz is biz. I'm not here entirely fer my health, an' you look fairly robustuous. Now, I'll tell you what Ferguson'll do. If you'll put up th' stuff, he'll git th' mine, an' then we'll go halvers. What do you say? Is it a go?"

"Do you mean, Col. Ferguson, that if I advance the required money, you're to have a one-half interest?"

"That's right. You ketch on mighty quick ter a bus'nis propersition."

"Pardon me, Colonel, but it does seem to me that you want a rather large share for your services."

"Reckon it may look kinder that way ter you, but Ferguson oughter have told you that he'll relieve you of all responserbility; he'll do th' managin', keep straight books, an' act white. If th' mine isn't a sure-enough winner — though it's a dead certainty she will be — then he'll quit-claim his half ter you free gratis. That's fair, isn't it? *What?*" And he looked straight into her eyes.

"Well, I'll think it over, consult a friend I have at Glenwood Springs, and let you know. I always investigate every business proposition very carefully, and I make but very few mistakes."

"That's right, only there hain't no time ter lose. Another thing: if you *do* go in with me, it must be kept a dead secret. Will you promise?"

"*I will*," she replied with all the impressiveness a woman ever gave those two small but pregnant words.

The Colonel then hurried to the telegraph office to communicate with Clarisse—to ask her to make sure that Madame Montchaveux should report favorably in answer to any letter or telegram from Mrs. Boylston.

In leaving Mrs. Boylston, the artful Colonel had purposely dropped a telegram, which she, being a woman, was not slow to pick up and read. It was dated at Oro Grande, addressed to the Colonel, and told of a very rich strike in “the mine.” Of course, Mrs. Boylston understood it, or thought that she did. To what else could it refer if not to the very mine about which the Colonel had just been telling her? She must write at once to her friend, the Madame; no, that was too slow—she must telegraph. But the Colonel’s message was sent some fifty minutes before she, quite out of breath and in a due state of nervous excitement, arrived at the Western Union office: moreover, his was marked “Rush,” while hers, in keeping with a lifelong habit closely to look after the almighty penny, was sent “Nite.”

Before it was time for answers, the Colonel again called upon Mrs. Boylston, and was greeted with a cordiality that at once put him in the highest spirits. The widow thought she had never seen him quite so jovial, so entertaining; in short, so charming. If he could only have had early in life the advantages of an education—but then, she was bound to admit that he had a bright mind and an energetic audacity. After all, what are mere linguistic accomplishments in a man compared to the essentials of a successful business career? One of the Colonel’s intellect could easily master the English grammar,

once he should set about it. At least he would not be voted a dolt, as was the late unlamented Boylston.

This time the Colonel talked on almost every subject of interest to the widow, save mines and love, and when the conversation drifted round to music he asked,

“How’s th’ Hub on music?”

“Oh, you know, Colonel, Bostonians are noted for their devotion to St. Cecilia.”

“Heavens!” thought he, “it’s too late; the field is already occupied.”

“Have they got music hospitals already?” he asked eagerly.

She looked hopelessly at him.

“You mean, do you not, hospitals for indigent musicians?”

“No, ma’am: I mean places where th’ halt, lame, an’ blind, without regard ter previous condition of servitude, can go ter be made whole by th’ strains of divine music, or th’ divine strains of music, whichever you prefer ter call it.” The Colonel mentally congratulated himself on the fineness of this speech.

“Why, Col. Ferguson, I never heard of such an institution.”

“Thought ’t was strange if Boston had got th’ edge on Denver, fer usually when a fad is worn thin in Denver it bobs up down in Boston.”

Mrs. Boylston seemed a trifle displeased at this, and the Colonel, fearing he had put his foot in it, made haste to say, “But Boston’s all right, if she is slow; she’s dead ter right on culture.” And the widow’s expression relaxed.

He then unfolded his great scheme in regard to music,

generously offering to let her in "on the ground floor," and closed by assuring her that there would be time enough to set The Great American St. Cecilia Society, Limited, in operation after she had made a fortune out of the Holy Moses mine.

That afternoon the Colonel got a team and drove Dr. Eisler out to see "th' finest ranch in all Ameriky," the Wildman ranch, of course; and when they returned, he found this message waiting for him:

GLENWOOD SPRINGS, COLO., 8/30.

Col. Golden S. Ferguson, Cameo Springs, Colo.:

Ma is solid. CLARISSE.

The next morning he received a note from Mrs. Boylston, asking him whether it would be quite convenient for him to call upon her at once upon business of the greatest urgency, an invitation that he made haste to accept. And on the following morning he closed his office, leaving his landlord the more or less gratifying assurance that he would see him later.

CHAPTER XX.

TWO TRIPS OF DIFFERENT KINDS.

MRS. BOYLSTON may have known where the Colonel went, as well as the object of his going, but, if so, she told no one. The truth is, she had received a most complimentary testimonial in answer to her telegram, and thereupon had given him the \$35,000—and that was the last she ever saw of him.

No sooner did the Colonel receive the money than he learned that an agent of an English syndicate (trust these Englishmen for finding the money-making things of the world) had, that very morning, left to go up and buy the Holy Moses mine, and of course unless the Colonel should head him off, the mine would undoubtedly be under contract before sunset. The Colonel therefore set his wits to work. He knew that the agent had gone by the usual route, and that he would reach the mine about 2 o'clock P. M. It was now 10 o'clock, and time for action was short. To telegraph to the owner would do no good, for he was at the mine, and that was too far away from an office. It was equally futile to hire a special train, for the agent had too much the start.

Perplexed as he was, the Colonel did not despair—he never did that. While he was revolving the situation, a circus parade passed down street, and a loud-voiced man on top of one of the gilded wagons announced a free balloon exhibition to take place from the exhibition-grounds at 11 o'clock. The Colonel noticed smoke from a near-by

chimney drifting towards the mountains, and a happy thought struck him. Hastily changing his clothes, and putting in a satchel a book, a box of cigars, a flask, and the \$35,000 of bank bills, he hurried away and arrived at the show-grounds just as the big balloon was about ready to take its flight.

Edging his way through the crowd to an acrobat in tights — advertised as “The Celebrated French Aëronaut, Prof. Jean Baloni!” — the Colonel called him aside and made a bargain with him, the substance of which was that, if the professor should fill the balloon to its utmost capacity and take him as a passenger, the former should receive one hundred dollars down, and another hundred when the latter should be safely landed some several miles beyond the Peak. Then the “aërial monster” was inflated to very bursting, so that she pulled and tugged at her moorings in a most threatening way, and to hold her down the united efforts of a small army of men and boys were required in addition to the usual stays.

At last all was ready. It was 12:45 o'clock when the Colonel, puffing at a cigar and disguised as a clown, came out of the dressing-tent and got into the great basket. No one recognized him, for a set of false whiskers effectually disguises almost anyone. Then the muscular and bespangled Prof. Baloni stepped lightly forward, got in with the make-believe clown, gave the signal, and they were off on their perilous journey to the clouds, the great crowd cheering lustily, and much gratuitous advice being given to the clown as to the care he should take of his whiskers—advice which he took with rare good-nature.

The balloon shot upward with tremendous speed, as if

eager to make up for lost time; then, striking an upper current, drifted rapidly toward the distant mountains.

Meantime, while the professor was giving his usual daring performance on the flying trapeze that depended from the basket, the Colonel unfurled to the breeze an American flag, whose graceful waves caused the crowd of spectators below again to cheer with renewed vigor.

In a short time the balloon was but a mere speck in the sky, and, as she dissolved to view, she seemed to be resting against the very top of the Peak. Some expressed the opinion that she dashed herself against its rocky sides, and one person went so far as to say that he saw the occupants leap for their lives. But a little later some one telephoned down from the hotel up there that the balloon had passed directly over the top of the Peak—over 14,00 feet above sea-level—and when last seen was slowly descending, several miles to the southwest, in the vicinity of Oro Grande.

A few days before this, at the suggestion of Col. Ferguson, a musical and literary entertainment had been gotten up by the young people, guests at the different hotels, for the benefit of the widow Harris and her children, and to Madge and Agnes was delegated the pleasant duty of delivering its proceeds. They were already slightly acquainted with Mrs. Harris, their attention having been called to her by Dr. Eisler shortly after her husband's death.

On their way to the Harris cottage they were met by Wildman, who, learning of their mission, said that he would like to have them take twenty dollars that Col. Fer-

guson, before going away, had intrusted to him for her. In speaking of the Colonel, Wildman remarked that no tale of distress ever found an unwilling ear in the Colonel, and that the chief charm of his benefactions was their spontaneity.

It was arranged that Agnes should present the gift. Mrs. Harris came to the door, and ushered them into a room which served both as reception- and bed-room. Though cheaply furnished, it was as clean and tidy as a room could be with five small children making free use of it.

"How is the baby?" asked Agnes, cheerily.

"The doctor says he's better, thank you," said the mother, whose heavy eyes betokened loss of sleep. "I think he's out of danger," she added.

"May we see him?" asked Madge.

"Certainly." And the mother went to the little crib where the infant was sleeping and lifted the light netting that was spread over him.

"Oh!" involuntarily exclaimed Agnes.

"You don't think he looks so well as he did when you were here last?" said the mother, touched and alarmed by the tone of Agnes's voice and scrutinizing closely her face.

"No," replied Agnes frankly; but she did not add, what was apparent, that the little sufferer looked more emaciated.

"Yes, the fever has made him thinner, but he'll get better; don't you think so?" asked the mother appealingly.

"I hope so, and I have no doubt of it since Dr. Eisler has said so," answered Madge encouragingly.

The mother's face brightened.

"I, too, have great confidence in Dr. Eisler. Don't know what I should have done without him; he's been so attentive and kind — has furnished all the medicines. I don't know how I can ever pay him." And Mrs. Harris applied the corner of her white apron to her eyes.

"You mustn't worry about that; there'll be some way provided, dear Mrs. Harris," suggested Agnes sympathetically.

"I know the Lord is good, and He has said 'Take no thought of the morrow,' but —"

"You mean that you can't see how it will come about?" queried Madge.

"Yes; that's it; I don't want to doubt Him. I *do* trust in Him," she said earnestly.

Agnes here stooped over the sleeping child and touched her lips to his feverish cheeks, and smoothed the clothes so gently that the little fellow dreamed on, perchance of an angel's visit. And then the three resumed their seats, and the young women cheered up the despondent mother-heart as best they could; and in a little while they withdrew. When they were going out of the front gate, Madge said,

"Why, Agnes, you entirely forgot our mission."

"Oh, no; I didn't."

"Why, you surely said nothing about the money, and I did not see you give it to her."

"She will find it," said Agnes.

After the visitors had gone, the baby fretted, and the mother on going to it found on its breast an envelope containing a roll of bills and a card on which were these words: "In His name."

And a little later the eldest child, coming suddenly into the room, found her mother on her knees at the baby's crib, her face bathed in tears.

"Is baby dead?" asked the frightened child.

"The Lord is good! The Lord is good!" sobbed the mother.

When Madge and Agnes reached the hotel they heard some one in the parlor singing in a fine baritone. They stopped by an open window just in time to hear the refrain, sung with an expression of much feeling:

"In that tender heart of thine,
Love of mine, O Love of mine!"

"I declare, it's the Doctor!" said Madge.

"He couldn't sing like that unless he felt the sentiment of the piece," observed Agnes.

"Don't let's disturb him," said Madge, a tinge of color coming into her cheeks. "Let's go down to Uncle Israel's and get some flowers for Mrs. Harris."

"All right," said Agnes, and away the two went, a perfect picture of blooming health and fine 'spirits, the Eastern girl not quite so tall and somewhat older than her Western friend, but a salt-air complexion made her almost as youthful-looking.

As they were walking along toward the electric-car station, Madge broke a period of silence—if one may so designate the comma-like intermissions of feminine dialogue—by asking Agnes whether she really thought Dr. Eisler was such a homely man.

"Homely? Why, I think he's perfectly lovely," replied Agnes.

"Do you, Agnes? Really and truly, do you?"

"Why, yes; don't you?"

"Oh, I think he's nice and all that, but he is so — well, he's queer; don't you think so?"

"He's very scientific, Madge, and maybe that makes him seem queer to some people. I like a man of brains — a man of advanced ideas; don't you?"

"But, Agnes, his forehead is so — is rather too high; don't you think so?"

"That's a sign of intellect; isn't it? His eyes are lovely: you must admit that."

"Yes, I know he has fine eyes and — but, changing the subject, what are you going to wear to the party to-morrow night? Do wear that lovely pink; you're perfectly bewitching in pink. If I were Mr. Morton, I should insist on your always wearing pink."

If man could thus argue against the inclinations of his heart and then lightly change to the subject of dress, how different he would be!

CHAPTER XXI.

THE GREENHOUSE PHILOSOPHER.

OLD ISRAEL GOODMAN, living alone among his flowers, was one of those strange characters sometimes found in a new community, concerning whose antecedents and history curiosity does not often make inquiry. For a number of years "Uncle Israel," as he was generally called, had carried on a small business as a florist, and since he contracted no debts and otherwise demeaned himself as a law-abiding citizen should, he was not disturbed, save as people came to him to buy of his flowers.

Years of seclusion had resulted in producing in him an unruffled tranquillity, a taciturnity not easily penetrated by strangers, and a philosophy which generally found expression in apothegms, if it found expression at all.

Though Madge and Agnes had been often to old Israel's for flowers, they had never succeeded in getting him to talk much with them. This time Madge was bent on satisfying her curiosity. So, when the flowers had been selected and cut, and the little old man in blue overalls had been told for whom they were getting them, they were astonished to find that he would take no pay for them; and this gave Madge a chance to engage him in conversation.

"You might as well take the money," she persisted.

"No, no: money is good pay for flowers for rich men's parties, but not for a poor widow's cheer," said he, shaking his head.

"But you're not rich, and you work so hard," insisted Madge, holding out a bill toward him.

"It's no temptation, Miss. Put it up, and take it along with the flowers to Mrs. Harris. No; I'm not rich, thank the Lord. Riches are dangerous. They're like the arc light that attracts by its dazzling brightness the poor little bugs, only to bring destruction."

"But, isn't poverty to be equally avoided?" suggested Madge, seeking to draw him out.

"Poverty is the training-school of all the virtues," he answered, again shaking his head.

"One can't well be contented with poverty, though," urged Madge, still seeking to draw him further into argument.

"Contentment, young woman, is the knowing how to coin adversity into a fair counterfeit of prosperity and making it pass current with one's self," he replied, clipping the dead leaves from a plant, and still declining to accept the money. Then, musing to himself for a moment, he said:

"No, I don't like that definition; it sounds like a cheat, as counterfeiting usually is; say, rather, that contentment is being at peace with God: that's better—peace with God!"

"What is happiness, then?" inquired Madge.

"Some think it is whatever is the greatest pleasure with the least trouble to themselves. But pleasure is like the perfume of this rose,—very grateful to our senses while it lasts; yet are we not sad even while smelling it to think it's so soon to be gone? No; don't live for mere pleasure alone."

"What, then, should one live for?"

"Live for the good of others. Such a life is like a beautiful plant: its seed is love; its soil is the Kingdom of God; its flower, charity; its fruit, eternal life."

"That's very beautiful; but should we not seek our own tranquillity first?"

"No, except as it comes through doing good for others. That was the mistake of my life, and I realize it now. Self-sacrifice is the Divine law. We can't withdraw from the world and at the same time give to it what God requires of every human being."

"May I ask what you think of love?" spoke up Agnes.

"Ah, my dear girl, love is a most delicate plant, whose roots are deep-seated in the heart: it won't blossom unless it have rich soil; selfishness is its deadly blight. But I don't need to tell you what love is; I can see its beauty in your fair young face: may it always be yours," said he, laughing softly, and laying his hand caressingly on Agnes's shoulder and gazing into her eyes with admiration, while Madge laughed at her friend's discomfiture.

"As for you," he said, turning and addressing Madge, "the lark's song is for you, and a sweet song it is, for love is in every note: a light heart is great joy."

Then, speaking to both, he said:

"Live with the flowers and the birds. Take an old man's advice: marry for love, and then live where love is kept fresh by daily contact with Nature; but don't let it win you away from your fellow-man." And he stroked the fringe of white hair beneath his chin and looked earnestly over his spectacles.

"Don't you get lonesome here?" asked Madge as they started to go.

"The Lord be praised! No; don't you see all these bright eyes watching me and waiting for me to fetch them a drink? They all know me; each has a language of its own which I understand. Flowers never frown; they never scold. Abuse one, and it will pine away and punish you with remorse," said the old man, looking admiringly at his pets while they seemed to be attentively listening, and a little dog sat at his feet and looked wistfully up into his benevolent face.

"What is your cunning little dog's name?" asked Agnes, observing the interest the little fellow manifested in the every movement of its master.

"Faith."

"What a queer name for a dog! Why do you call it that?"

"Because that's 'the substance of things hoped for' — a true friend. Dogs make the best of friends: they keep our secrets, and they lick one's hand when there's nothing in it."

"That's so," said Agnes, stroking Faith's curly hair. "I'm so fond of a nice dog, and I haven't had a romp with one in so long a time that, to see one, makes me homesick for my old Hero."

"We are very much obliged to you, Uncle Israel, for the flowers, and we'll tell Mrs. Harris that you sent them with your compliments," said Madge sweetly.

"No; don't do that. Just give them to her and say nothing about my sending them; I don't send them — I give them to you."

"As you will. Good-by," said Madge, smiling again, while the gray-headed philosopher stood with a watering-pot elevated in his hand ready to give a drink to his pets, and a beneficent smile radiating his countenance.

"And we thank you for your good advice," added Agnes, in which Madge joined.

When his visitors were gone, Uncle Israel (as is the habit of one living much alone) muttered and chuckled to himself and talked to his flowers and his dog in a way that might have caused a stranger to suspect his sanity.

"There, there! Now don't be impatient: I'm coming. My, how thirsty you were! No; you can't have another drop — not another drop! Well, wait, wait, till I get some more. Riches! Riches! Humph! Blessed be the man who can laugh at them as I do now." Thus he ran on, talking and laughing to himself as he watered his flowers and looking affectionately upon his simple surroundings. And what a benevolent countenance he had! What mellifluous music in his laughter!

Agnes and Madge, when they reached the hotel, again heard Dr. Eisler singing and accompanying himself on the piano. Agnes excused herself, but Madge went softly in, stopping at the door to listen to the concluding words of DeKoven's "Lark Song":

"Come, O Lark, and go with me,
To my Love, and tenderly
Sing for me, I love but thee, I love but thee!"

When he had finished, the Doctor wheeled about on the stool, and there stood Madge, a beautiful flush upon her cheeks.

"I'd like to have a copy of that," she said simply with lowered eyes — a request the Doctor was only too glad to comply with.

Then the two together sang several pieces, and after that the Doctor got to explaining his new theory in regard to man having a sort of musical key — a distinctive physical musical key to which his whole nature is attuned, and how reasonable it was to expect great results from experiments in the treatment of disease — neurotic cases, especially — by the soothing power of music nicely adjusted to the requirements of the patient. He pointed out what he called "The correlation between Music and Poetry" — that the poet who conceives the thought and the composer who gives it musical expression must have natures in harmony. And, as he warmed to his subject, he pictured the perfect union that comes of two lovers having the same natural musical key (two souls with but a single chord, so to speak) such, for instance, as —"

"Doctor, there's some one knocking at the door," whispered Madge.

"I'll bet it's that confounded Ferguson," thought the Doctor; but addressing himself to Madge, he said:

"Let him rap. As I was about to say, two natures such as yours and —"

A man here entered to say that he had been sent to fetch the Doctor immediately. And so this chapter must end here.

CHAPTER XXII.

SOME UNEXPECTED THINGS HAPPEN.

THE season was drawing to a close. Before leaving for their homes, Madge and Agnes went once more to see Uncle Israel, and found him at work among his flowers, his faithful friend, the little dog, lying stretched full length at his feet. At their approach, Faith roused up and wagged and sniffed and contorted as dogs do in greeting their friends.

"Uncle Israel, we've come to say good-by," began Madge, her face beaming.

"That's very good of you, my young friends," acknowledged the old gardener, extending his calloused right hand first to the one and then to the other, and looking over his spectacles in the way aged people do when they would have an unobstructed view of a near object. "It's very good of you," he repeated. "I'm glad you thought of me, 'A last leaf upon the tree,' as Holmes puts it; but I'm sorry you have to go so soon. September is such a delightful month here, and I'm sure you would enjoy the tints that autumn brings to our mountain foliage."

"Oh, you know we've been here all summer, and we really must go. We'll treasure our visits with you as among our pleasantest experiences out here," assured Madge.

"And so my young friends are going home. Eh?" he mused. "And I'll be going home, too, before long, and perhaps before you come again. However, if I'm not

here when you return, perhaps you may find some of my flowers." And he clipped a choice rose for each, while

"His smile was beaming brightly,
And his soft hair floated whitely,
Round a face as fair and sightly
As a pious priest's of yore."

"Please, Uncle Israel, don't talk so; you grieve us," pleaded Madge.

"Grief is a hot wind that blights. We should be too philosophical to grieve: don't mourn for what can't be helped," said he sententiously.

"But we can't be joyous at such a sad thought," commented Agnes.

"Ah, my young friends, when you're as old as I am you will look at the final home-going with different eyes, and it is a wise provision of Providence. Not to have an anxiety about the future is a great blessing. What is anxiety but a certain distrust of the Almighty?" he argued, his face having the expression of one contemplating a pleasant journey.

Agnes here embraced the opportunity of the silence that followed, to have a romp with Faith. After chasing each other up and down the long, narrow aisles, and occasionally tipping over a pot of plants,—a liberty Uncle Israel had given, for he said that he enjoyed the sport, and would join in it were he not so old,—Agnes stopped to rest.

"I do wish that Aunt Rebecca were here to see this cunning little fellow!" exclaimed she quite breathlessly.

At the mention of Aunt Rebecca's name, the old man dropped the trowel he was holding, and looked at Agnes intently. He appeared dumfounded.

"What is your aunt's full name?" he asked presently.

"Rebecca Norwood," answered Agnes.

"Is it possible?"

"She's out here with me for her health."

"Impossible!" exclaimed Uncle Israel, adding: "Is she — is she ill now?"

"No; she's quite recovered. Did you ever know her?"

"Yes; I went to school with her years ago, back in Vermont."

"How very strange! You must come right over and see her; she'll be glad to see you, I'm sure."

"No," he said slowly, "I can't do that; but I wish that you'd give her these," picking a handful of forget-me-nots. "Her hair is brown like yours," he continued, his mind in retrospection.

"It's gray now — a beautiful gray."

"Is it possible. Yes, yes, I suppose so; it's been many a long year since I saw her," he mused, a touch of pathos in his voice.

When his visitors started to go, Uncle Israel motioned to Agnes to tarry, and when they were alone he said:

"Tell your aunt that I'd like to know whether she has forgiven me. That's all. Good-by!"

It may be stated here that Aunt Rebecca's health, what by the mineral waters, the mountain air, and Dr. Eisler's treatment, was so much improved that she now really enjoyed the pleasure of earthly existence. Her little sojourn in a new world had broadened her views somewhat — one of the things she needed; for does not living in a rut for years degenerate a saint almost to the level of an ordinary sinner?

When Agnes gave her aunt the flowers and Uncle Israel's message, there was an expression of astonishment that soon gave way to one of intense interest as Agnes detailed the story of her visits to the greenhouse. It was like a revelation from the dead, for Aunt Rebecca had not heard from her old lover in such a long, long time that she had come to believe him no longer of this earth.

The reason of the estrangement between them was, as the reader may have surmised, on account of their religious views. She believed that no couple should marry unless they belonged to the same church, and as he differed from her, and she would not — very stubbornly, as he thought — join his church, they drifted apart. For a while they exchanged letters, and his were the ones that were tied with the faded ribbon in the tray of her trunk.

It was not long after Aunt Rebecca received the forget-me-nots till she indited a note addressed to "Mr. Israel Goodman." It was very short. "I should like very much to see you," was its substance. And Uncle Israel shortly after its receipt put on his best suit, hunted up his cane, and was soon at the hotel, where he found his old sweetheart in a state of joyous expectancy.

It was about this time that Morton and Agnes were seated with a party of friends in the hotel parlors, recounting some of the experiences of the summer. A chill in the mountain air made a fire in the open grate most acceptable. Suddenly a gust of wind from an open door caused all to look in that direction.

"I declare!" exclaimed Morton, "if there isn't Wildman!"

In a moment Wildman was shaking hands with the friends whom he had not seen in some weeks, and they were saying in chorus that he was the very person they wished to see. He declined to take a seat, explaining that a friend was waiting for him at the door.

Like many another Westerner, Wildman was possessed of a hobby. He believed that environment accounted for almost everything in human attainment—that character was the resultant of one's surroundings, and that tendencies are not inherited to such an extent as to make them at all controlling factors in the problem. He fancied, for instance, that a forward girl, brought up in the atmosphere of a mining-camp, could, if taken in time and subjected to uplifting and refining influences, be transformed into a lovely and noble woman. He had never tested his theory, but still he had every confidence in it. Moreover, Dr. Eisler, to whom he had confidentially submitted it, gave it his unqualified indorsement, and urged him to avail himself of his first opportunity. "You may achieve the reputation of a crank," commented the Doctor, "but remember that a crank is only a person of convictions living in advance of his day and generation."

The pulse beats fast in the high elevations of Colorado, the mind is alert and receptive, and nothing escapes the clear eye of the native; hence, Wildman felt that an experiment of a few weeks would be quite sufficient to demonstrate the truth or falsity of his theory, and therefore he had gone up to Glenwood Springs, where he spent some weeks,—not in hunting mountain lions, but in long talks and in reading books in the company of a girl who proved

to be an eager listener and a most tractable pupil — with the “friend” who was now waiting for him at the door.

“Bring him in,” they insisted.

“It’s — ah — it’s Miss Montchaveux,” he blushed.

“By all means, then; we wish to meet her,” urged Madge.

Wildman went out, and soon reappeared with Clarisse, whom he introduced to those who had not met her. After a pleasant chat, in which it was learned that Clarisse was on her way home and had stopped over a day to make some social calls, Wildman and his companion withdrew.

The great change in Clarisse’s behavior was remarked by all, and many opinions of her underwent quick revision, — her quiet and ladylike demeanor now being in striking contrast to her former wild and reckless actions. Madge observed to Agnes that she was never so agreeably surprised in a person of whom she had formed an unfavorable opinion, and Agnes remarked that this experience would teach her not to prejudge persons, while Dr. Eisler admitted that, after seeing Clarisse’s violet eyes at closer range, it was not difficult to account for Wildman’s infatuation. All agreed that if the change which had been wrought in such a short time was the result of Wildman’s influence, he was certainly to be congratulated, and that in time he would doubtless achieve his ambition of making a most refined woman of her.

Another thing was commented on, and that was the absence of diamond rings from Clarisse’s fingers, and in their stead, the presence of a plain gold band, which, when worn on the particular finger of the left hand on which she wore it, betokens something serious.

"Mrs. Boylston is dead!" exclaimed the clerk of the hotel, rushing into the room. "She went up to the top of the Peak on a moonlight excursion, and they have just 'phoned down that she has dropped dead, probably of heart disease."

At this announcement there was a general expression of regret, but no tears were shed. In speaking of her to Morton, Dr. Eisler said:

"I, perhaps, knew her better than anyone here, for she was a patient of mine, and confided in me. I take it there is no impropriety in my saying that her experiences in the world had embittered her, and made her very selfish. Had she been blessed with children, in my opinion she would have been a very different woman. As it was, the sufferings of others of her sex did not touch her heart; that, to her, was the fate of woman."

"Still, I presume that she had her good qualities," said Morton, charitably.

"Yes, I happen to know that she was intending to make her will in a few days, and to give all of her property to orphan asylums: you know she had no relatives living."

"That would have been a very noble thing for her to do," commented Morton. "It's too bad she put off making the will. Why do people neglect such things?"

"I especially regret her untimely taking-off, for between you and me, I fancy that, could I have treated her eyes a little longer, I'd have established a point of much interest to my profession,—a change of the disposition through treatment of the eye alone. However, as it is, I don't know but that I might fairly claim the intended benefactions as a result of the treatment. Eh?"

Morton smiled, but was too polite to yield to the impulse to laugh outright.

“I have heard of cross eyes being treated, but I did not know that you doctors carried the matter so far as to undertake cross dispositions,” twitted Morton. “You remind me, Doctor, of that experimental philosopher who had a theory that a horse’s diet of hay could be daily reduced one straw at a time till the horse would be able to get along in time without any hay at all; but, unfortunately, the day before he was to give the horse but a single straw, the poor animal died, and so his theory remained unproved.”

CHAPTER XXIII.

A PERFECT DAY.

MADGE BARDSLEY was apparently still heart-whole and fancy-free, though a certain physician had lately been most assiduous in his attentions. The time for her home-going was now fast approaching, and that physician began to realize how very lonesome he would be without the winsome smile and the merry laugh which had daily captivated him and made him her willing slave.

Though Madge had not accepted his suit, she had, whether wittingly or not, kept the Doctor in a sort of torture that was delicious to him. Many a time had he been raised from the depths by a glance from her beautiful eyes, and many a time cast down again by a lowering thereof; and yet he was perfectly willing that this should go on forever. Some lover may understand this.

It was the day before Madge's departure that the Doctor was made supremely happy — if the temporary transports of a man in his condition may be called that — by her accepting his invitation to go with him to that particular cañon which the Cameo Springs folk especially delight in showing to visitors. The scenery would not be new to them, but the Doctor somehow felt that that was the one spot of all to witness the climax of this — was it a farce, a comedy, or a tragedy?

Assisting Madge into the buggy, the Doctor could not help remarking the beautiful poise of her head, the plumpness of her hands, the well-arched feet, and the short upper-

lip so common to beautiful women: indeed, as he watched her draw on her gloves, and as he studied her profile, to him

“She was a form of life and light,
That, seen, became a part of sight.”

It was one of those perfect Colorado mornings only to be approximately described—the air delightfully cool and invigorating, and the passing clouds causing shadows to swiftly chase one another over the brown-carpeted prairies.

Their conversation had a wide range: philosophy, art, music, religion, theosophy, and even evolution, were included, and the Doctor found himself quite ready to accept the suggestions of any philosophy, or the behests of any religion of which Madge Bardsley chanced to be a votary.

“Do you,” asked the Doctor, “believe with Schopenhauer, that man is never in perfect harmony save with himself? In other words, that perfect tranquillity is found only in solitude?”

“I don’t know how it is with man,” she replied, “but as to woman, my observation is that the opposite is true: solitude is not natural to her; she is essentially an optimist,—and don’t you think ’tis well for the world that she should be?”

The Doctor wondered how a girl could have such mature views of life, and then his fancy soared away into space,—a sort of heaven filled with Madge Bardsleys; but a rising inflection of her voice as she finished brought him back to earth, and he hastened to gather together his scattered thoughts.

“No doubt—certainly—of course,” he stammered.

"One can never, of course, be in perfect harmony with one's self," she resumed, "for that implies perfection."

"I couldn't, but — but, I should think you might," he said earnestly.

Madge blushed becomingly in silent acknowledgment of the compliment.

"Do you think," he ventured, coming to her relief, "that the individual owes any duty to the world that is paramount to his own tranquillity?" And he mentally patted himself on the head for the meat his question contained.

"Yes," answered she quietly, "I do: however, I almost agree with Eugene Aram, that mental activity and moral quietude are the two states which, were they perfected and united, would constitute perfect happiness. I wish that he had added physical activity." Perhaps she was just then thinking of life on a Colorado ranch. Then she added: "I can't agree with him at all in his theory that more pain than pleasure is occasioned us by others."

"Nor I," chimed in the Doctor with an emphasis that showed what a firm altruist he had become.

They had now reached the mouth of the cañon, where some thrifty person had erected a fence in such a way as to cause all who would behold the cañon's beauties to pay tribute to his business sagacity. Having paid the toll, they soon found themselves in the narrow defiles.

At first the road with long sweeps curved in and out, crossing and re-crossing the little stream, which twisted and turned to accommodate itself to the great boulders that ages before had fallen from their lofty pinnacles to find lodgment in its narrow bed. At times the rushing

water seemed to laugh at these huge obstacles, and would slip around them caressingly, and babble forth below, shining and sparkling, and go merrily on; again, when too many crowded its bed, it would dash turbulently against them, and leap wildly over them, and lash itself into a perfect fury, as if resenting their intrusion.

Dr. Eisler, studying his companion's face, was puzzled. She did not look to be over twenty, and yet her conversation registered at least a dozen more years—but we must not miss this fine scenery.

Here, the road was built out over the water; there, it cut into the very side of the mountain. Madge looked back, but could not see out: they seemed completely shut in by the massive walls of rock which rose precipitously. Not a sound was to be heard save the muffled revolutions of the wheels on the sandy road. The stillness was oppressive. Madge was

“Quiet as a nun,
Breathless with adoration.”

How easy to imagine that in this vast, heaven-canopied amphitheater came the fabled gods to witness the mightiest dramas of the universe; and that, departing, a death-like stillness settled over it, to be broken only by the profanations of puny man. And there in the midst of Nature's awful grandeur, nailed to a pine tree, was a conspicuous sign reading:

SEE FERGUSON FOR THAT TIRED FEELING.
--

It was the same sign that DeLancey and Agnes had seen earlier in the summer, but some one had erased the words "gold mines" and substituted "That tired feeling." The road had ended abruptly, and the Doctor hitched the horse and helped Madge to alight.

"Poor Col. Ferguson! He was such a study to me. I do wonder what has become of him!" said Madge, reading the sign and wondering why it should read as it did.

"Why, I saw him at a distance the other day down in Denver, arm-in-arm with old Senator Montchaveux. They were walking down Arapahoe street, and the Colonel looked finer than ever—as though he might recently have struck it rich: new suit, kid gloves, new silk hat, patent-leather shoes, and—well, he was rigged out regardless of expense."

"I do declare! Do you know, Doctor, that Mr. Wildman has the greatest confidence in him?"

"And well he should have—at least in his business ability, for the Colonel recently sold his ranch for him, and got a very big price for it, too."

"Dr. Eisler, has that lovely place been sold?"

"It has."

"I am so sorry, for I was so captivated by it. There are such magnificent views to be had out there; such delightful sweeps for the eye; such lovely prairies for horseback-riding. I had so hoped that I might be able to induce papa to come out here—he needs a change—and buy it. If it were only mine, I should be so happy."

"It is not for sale now."

A short walk along a winding path brought them to the foot of the falls where a ribbon of water glides down its smooth and almost perpendicular track and over ledges,

and down, again and again, seven times, till it finds a trysting-place where it swirls and eddies as if loth to leave its beautiful crystal home for the long and tedious journey to the sea. A small boy was cooling his brown bare feet in the pool.

Long flights of steep steps lead from the pool to a point above the falls, where a magnificent view rewards the visitor, and where, too, is a seat in a shady bower,—as romantic a spot as bashful lover ever had in which to declare himself—and Madge and the Doctor stopped there.

When they returned, the boy was still playing in the water, and he noticed the Doctor's happy look and that Madge was leaning tenderly on his arm, her face all radiant.

"Love comes like a summer's dream," whistled the boy, but such was the Doctor's absorption that he did not even see the chap.

"What a perfect day! In all of my Colorado experience I never saw the sky so blue," observed the Doctor when they reached the buggy.

"It is all sunshine in Colorado to me, Henry dear," said Madge with a very happy smile.

That evening the Doctor and Madge were alone in the hotel parlor, and upon the latter's request for a song the former sang with much feeling, "If the World Belonged to Me," a few bars of which will be found on the following page.

And then Madge's happiness was made complete by the Doctor telling her that he was the person who had bought the Wildman ranch, and that he intended to give it to her

for a wedding present, and that it should, if she so wished, be their future home.

Dar - ling mine, sweet-heart mine, If the world be-longed to me,

dolce ed espressivo.

I would give it all to thee, Glad-ly give it all to thee.

pp

Dar - ling mine, sweet-heart mine, If the world be-longed to me,

I would give it all to thee, Glad-ly give it all to thee.

rit. e din.

rit. e dim.

By courtesy of Theo. Presser, Music Publisher, Philadelphia.

CHAPTER XXIV.

WHAT WILL HE DO WITH IT?

ONE year has elapsed since the events just recorded. Agnes, now Mrs. Morton, has received a letter from Madge Eisler, *née* Bardsley, full of enthusiasm for her new Colorado home, and conveying news of much interest to the Mortons. She was very happy in the love of "the best husband on earth," who for her sake had given up his medical practice and all of his hobbies, and was enjoying a life of perfect contentment on the ranch.

Among other things, she wrote that Mrs. Harris was now living in a cottage without a mortgage on it, some unknown person having generously paid off the indebtedness. Joe Wildman had been very fortunate in mines at Oro Grande, and would soon leave for Europe with his bride, Clarisse,— "One of those 'little trips,'" she added parenthetically. The Holy Moses had recently been sold—much to everybody's surprise—for one million dollars, and in consequence Col. Ferguson had achieved the acme of a Colorado man's ambition, a fine house on Capitol Hill.

The letter had this postscript: "Mr. Morton will regret that he did not take some stock in the Last Chance Extension Mining Company, Limited, for I hear that it has gone up wonderfully in value. And, oh, yes, Agnes, what do you think is the very latest in this land where, as Col. Ferguson used to say, 'The unexpected always happens'? It is rumored that Reginald DeLancey, having squandered

all of his money and being ashamed to go back to his father, has, in a fit of despondency, committed suicide up at Oro Grande. Poor fellow!"

Time rolled on.

In the course of events Wildman and Clarisse, instead of going abroad, were prevailed upon to make their home with Col. Ferguson. Indeed, it was with that expectation that the Colonel had bought the fine house in Denver; and now for the first time he enjoyed the comforts of a home life.

It will be remembered that Mrs. Bøylston died suddenly without leaving the scratch of a pen to indicate that she had any interest in the Holy Moses mine, and there was absolutely no evidence whatever of her interest in it. So closely had she guarded her secret that she had not mentioned it to a living soul. If so disposed, Col. Ferguson could keep the whole of the proceeds of the sale of the mine and nobody would be any the wiser. What would you have done had you been in his place?

What Ferguson did was this: He instituted search for the purpose and with the hope of finding out whether she had left any heirs; but his efforts were fruitless. Then he worried about it, for it had ever been his intention to act "white" by her as he had promised to do.

Finally, one day the Colonel thought of something—he would go up and ask his old friend, Uncle Israel, as to his duty in the matter. And so his private car was attached to the very next train bound for Cameo Springs. Upon arriving there, he hired a carriage—no more tramping over dusty roads for him—and drove direct to the Goodman cottage, where he was greeted most cordially, for

Uncle Israel liked him, and it dated back to a time when the Colonel did not always know where to get the money to pay for his next meal. Even little Faith remembered him, and sniffed and whisked about him in a way that made him feel as though he were one of the family but just returned from a long absence.

"Reckon you've heard of my sellin' th' Holy Moses?" queried the Colonel presently.

"Yes. Is it true that you got one million dollars for it?"

"That's what. Not all cash, but it's as good as that."

"My conscience! I'm sorry for you, Golden."

"Why, Uncle Israel, I thought you'd be tickled ter death, like a boy with a new suit of clothes an' red-top boots."

"I'd rejoice to know that my friend had enough of this world's goods, so that he might never want again for the necessities, but a man who has that much money is in great danger—great danger!"

"What do you mean? Think I'd oughter hire a feller ter act as body-guard? I'm not afraid—not a bit!"

"No; not that: I mean the responsibility of it—you'll have more to account for. If you do wisely with it, well and good; but, if you don't handle it as a sacred trust, it will prove a curse instead of a blessing. It's the peril of it to your soul that I fear."

A serious look came into the Colonel's face, and the two were silent for some time. It was the first time that the possession of riches had ever appeared to the Colonel in the light of anything other than as a means of securing a life of ease and pleasure. Then he told Uncle Israel

about the half-interest that in equity belonged to Mrs. Boylston, and Uncle Israel told him of what he had heard Dr. Eisler had said in regard to Mrs. Boylston's intention to bequeath all of her property to an orphan asylum.

"Say," said the Colonel, stroking his mustache reflectively, "what do you say ter gettin' up a syndicate—no, that's not jest th' word—no matter—fer th' good of th' orphans that haven't no homes, an' put in Mrs. B.'s share, an' I'll sling in another hundred thousand. Call it after Pickens—Pickens Instertute, fer instance?"

"Why call it that?" queried Uncle Israel, dazed by the magnitude of the proposed enterprise.

"After little Dick Pickens that got done fer in that railroad wreck. Want ter do somethin' fer his sake. If it hadn't been fer me a-gettin' him that job he might've been alive ter-day. Poor little feller! An' he might've growed up ter be President, fer he had th' sand—was willin' ter go ter th' pen ruther'n give up a secret, an' that's what Ferguson calls sand." And his voice choked with emotion.

"That would be a very noble thing to do," said Uncle Israel, adding: "And as I remember it the lad himself was an orphan."

"That was his gen'ral repertation," asserted the Colonel solemnly.

Pretty soon the Colonel got a quantity of flowers, and, taking Uncle Israel with him, drove out to Julia's grave. While spinning along over the hard, smooth road,—Colorado has the finest natural roads in the world,—the conversation became reminiscent, and the Colonel unbosomed himself as perhaps he had never done before. They had

been talking of Clarisse, and the fond uncle had unfolded to his aged companion some great plans for her, and in a way that showed the depth of his affection for her. Presently he said,

"Ever hear 'bout what happened ter her pa?"

"No; I never did," replied Uncle Israel.

"Met his death sorter by accident out her in th' early days — them cottonwoods in th' streets back yonder was mere saplin's. I said nothin' 'bout it, a-hopin' it would die out."

"Why, there's nothing about an accident to be ashamed of."

"Was in his case: you see, he was hung."

"Hanged!" exclaimed Uncle Israel.

"That's right. He was hung. Poor Jim! Vigilance committee did th' bus'nis — thought he was a horse-thief."

"Is it possible?"

"Made a big mistake too, fer after 't was all over th' feller what really did it 'fessed up, but 't was then too late fer Jim ter come back for a new trial. My poor sister died of a broken heart, so they tell me. Hain't got no use fer folks that takes th' law into their own dirty hands. A mob has no more sense 'n a herd of Texas steers on a stampede. That's right!"

"Were they arrested for it?"

"No; I couldn't find out who did it, and hadn't no money ter hire detectives. Reckon th' law's run out by this time, but if it hain't, I'll spend some money tryin' ter run th' rascals down, an' git even with 'em. D—n 'em!" And the Colonel's eyes flashed and his voice quivered with emotion.

"Oh, Golden, my friend, you know that I feel for you — that I sympathize with you; but I beg of you don't be revengeful. Rest assured that every one who took part in that unfortunate affair —"

"Call it *murder!*"

"Well, if you please: I say that every man has paid the penalty for it, and has perhaps suffered enough."

"Not much, they haven't,—though one of 'em did go crazy an' kill himself. Th' rest of 'em have got ter be —"

"Stop! Stop and think. Evil-doing always brings its own punishment. 'An eye for an eye' was the old Mosaic law, but you know the lowly Nazarene taught us a better way — the law of love, the Golden Rule." And as the old man went on talking, somehow the look of vengeance died out of the Colonel's face, and the old smile returned.

"Don't know of anyone who's got a Mexican hairless to sell, do you?" asked the Colonel presently, rubbing his right knee. "I'm gittin' a touch of th' rheumatiz, an' they say that a Mexican hairless is dead medicine fer it. Have four dogs now, an' one more will fix me out complete."

"No, I really don't," replied Uncle Israel.

"If you run across one, send him down ter me by express c. o. d. Will you?"

"I will."

"By th' way, how's your niece, Agnes Morton?" shifted the Colonel.

"Very well, I believe."

"Bully good girl that — aurif'rous angel — got a heart as big as an ox's. Wildman told me about how good she was ter the widder Harris. Next time you write her let

me know. Want ter git you ter put in a little postoffice order fer a couple of hundred ter blow in on posies fer folks."

They had now reached the lonely grave.

"Needs a monument, don't it?" said the Colonel, getting out and proceeding to place an armful of flowers on the sunken spot in the prairie.

"Her memory does,—not what is here, though," observed Uncle Israel, following closely with another armful.

"If you was in my place, what kind would you put up?"

"I'd make the best possible use of my fortune for the good of humanity—that's the kind that will last for all time."

The Colonel reflected a moment.

"That's right! That's jest what I'll do, if you'll act as gen'ral sup'rintendent. You see, Clarisse an' Joe have enough of their own, an' hain't got no partic'lar use fer so much stuff. Guess sister Julia 'ud have liked ter have me blow it in that-a-way. She was th' only woman that ever loved me before Clarisse, an' poor girl—" He did not finish. Something seemed to tighten at his throat.

"Praise the Lord! Nothing would give me more pleasure than to help you; though I'd rather advise you as a friend, and without pay."

"No, sir; that won't do. You've got ter sell out here an' come on down ter Denver. I'll pay you a decent sal'ry, an' mebbe buy your bloomin' old greenhouse plant here, if you'll take a right price fer it," replied the Colonel with his old-time brusqueness, and a twinkle of the eyes that was not so common since he had been struggling with his great fortune.

Uncle Israel well knew that his friend was in earnest; but could he do it? Could he leave his cottage, lowly though it was, and his beautiful flowers so dear to his heart?

"Fix you up a dandy place down there," persuaded the Colonel.

But Uncle Israel made no response. He felt that money could not buy another such a greenhouse,—not that one might not be finer, of course, but this one he had built with his own hands; each nook and corner, each shelf and bench, had its associations.

"Besides, Uncle, if this million of mine has got ter be accounted fer th' way you say in th' last round-up, an' there's such a big job in th' handlin' of it, why, I've jest got ter have help, that's all there is about it; an' as I'm willin' ter pay th' fiddler, it strikes me you're everlastin'ly bound ter ketch hold. If a poor man has th' chance ter use big money, hain't it as much his duty as 't is th' rich feller's?" persuasively argued the Colonel.

"But," protested Uncle Israel, "you can't do charity by proxy; with every dollar of money you must give one hundred cents' worth of self, if you'd get the real blessing.

'The gift without the giver is bare.'

What the world needs to-day is not so much the giving of money as the giving of sympathy—human sympathy!"

"Well, you've got a purty big stock of that article on hand, or used ter have—you don't seem ter sympathize so darned much with me now, when I need you more'n I ever did."

This was irresistible, and Uncle Israel capitulated.

"Have you any special plans?" Uncle Israel asked.

"No further 'n that I want it fixed so if any poor devil of a cow-puncher, or newspaper feller, or brakeman, or real-estate an' insurance agent, or minin' broker comes along an' says he's hungry, it's a go, an' he's ter have a good square meal, an' a warm bed, too, if he wants it. Now, what's *your* notion?"

Uncle Israel was completely dazed at the magnitude of the task. He had never dreamed of such a thing as having a fortune to use as he saw fit, though often he had thought that, if he were rich, he would not use his wealth as did many of whom he had read. Now he realized how much easier it is to criticize others than wisely to plan for one's self.

"I can't say—at once," said he, hesitatingly. "It seems to me, however, that were I in your place I'd invest it all in good, interest-bearing securities, and then simply use the income. In that way my benefactions could be made permanent. As to what persons or objects I'd assist, that is something I should want to study over very carefully, for indiscriminating giving often proves hurtful, and—"

"Now, look-a-here. I don't want you ter git me mixed up in no fine argument 'bout it. I'm hirin' you because I know you'll find th' right way, an' because I wouldn't. So think it all out fer yourself an' then draw on yours truly."

"My dear friend, I can't—I mustn't assume to act for you."

He was appalled at the thought, and would have turned away from the task had it not been for his sense of duty.

"That's all right," said the Colonel; "fire away an'

do th' best you can, an' Ferguson 'll help around on th' sides. Then, there's Clarisse: she'll want you, too, fer she's worried ter death with her pile. They're at her day an' night ter give ter this thing an' that."

"Why, I don't understand. Has she, too, come into a fortune?"

"What! Haven't you heard of old Senator Montchaux recently a-goin' over th' range an' a-leavin' two an' a half million ter her? Wonder if th' old feller is in th' hands of his friends, as he was while on earth? Gosh! how th' polerticians used ter bleed him; it's a wonder he had a plunk left."

"And what has become of his wife?"

"Oh, Ameriky wasn't rich enough fer her blood, an' so she's gone to France ter live on a plateau or chateau, or somethin' of th' sort. Wouldn't be s'prised if she'd presently pick up an' marry a bloomin' bankrupt duke or valet; would you?"

Uncle Israel smiled, and the Colonel resumed:

"You'll have your hands plumb full 'twixt Clarisse an' me; but we've jest got ter git help, or else sell out an' take ter th' mountains. Why, Uncle Israel, you've no idea how we're pesticated,—sercieties fer this, that, an' t'other thing; fer th' halt, lame, an' blind, an' deaf an' dumb, an' ev'ry other sick, sore, an' distressin' beggar in-stertution you can think of."

Soon they were on their way back to town; and while they went on talking over their plans for using the Colonel's vast fortune for the benefit of mankind, the setting sun bathed the distant mountains with a tender light and there was a peacefulness all about.

CHAPTER XXV.

HITTING THE TRAIL.

COLONEL FERGUSON and Uncle Israel had indulged in the not uncommon folly of counting chickens before they are hatched. The Pickens Institute was not at once to be built, the sufferings of humanity to be speedily alleviated, nor the Goodmans to leave their cottage.

While it was true that the Holy Moses mine had been bonded for the enormous amount stated, the purchase-price had not all been paid, and, as is sometimes the case with mining deals, "the powerful English syndicate," as the local newspapers spoke of it, was in reality an irresponsible combination of speculators. As a matter of fact, they paid but a comparatively small part of the stipulated price in cash, and then a number of claimants to the title sprang up to harass with litigation until they should be bought off or given an interest in the property, and a great strike and a financial panic came on; so that, what with litigation, labor troubles and hard times, the purchasers of the Holy Moses never made another payment.

Meantime, the Colonel with the splendid enthusiasm of one of his sanguine temperament, believing that the promised payments would promptly be met, and also that a great fortune was to be made by buying equities in city property at its then seemingly low valuation, had invested all of his money, confidently expecting to be able to meet the obligations assumed with the money he should from time to time receive from the sale of the mine.

Hence, in time, as money became tighter and the promised returns failed him, the Colonel found himself not only penniless, but also some thousands of dollars in debt.

Wildman and his wife urgently insisted upon his remaining with them, and did everything in their power to make life pleasant for him; and then, too, there had come to their home a wee bit of humanity to whom the Colonel was greatly attached, and into whose heavenly eyes he would sit by the hour and gaze. How he did enjoy cooing to it, and rocking it, and pretending to devour its cunning pink toes! Perhaps the proudest day of the Colonel's life was when this wonderful baby refused to be comforted until he had taken it and let it nestle down to sleep in his arms. But he was too independent to think of remaining in that beautiful home; besides, the Pickens Institute idea seemed completely to dominate him, and he was determined not to give up its realization. Indeed, it was mainly with the hope of enlarging upon Uncle Israel's plans and of pleasantly surprising him that the Colonel had invested as he had — he had thought thus to double his money. But alas, it was not to be! Uncle Israel's disappointment when he should hear of what had happened was, to the Colonel, the very hardest part of it all.

A man of less hopefulness and saucy energy might have grown despondent and possibly have made short shift of life, but not so the Colonel: he would go at once and retrieve his fallen fortunes by discovering a mine richer than the Holy Moses, and one about whose title there should be no question. So, one bright summer day, dressed in the garb of a mining prospector, with a stubble of gray on his face, trudging slowly along behind a burro

loaded with camp utensils — a load somewhat bigger than the little animal upon whose back it was strapped — he came up to the door of the Goodman cottage.

Uncle Israel was busy caring for his flowers, and paid no attention to the stranger until he called out in a cheery voice,

“Don’t know this here old contraption, hey?”

“Well, what in the world! Why, I do declare! What does this all mean?” cried Uncle Israel in astonishment, hastening to grasp the Colonel’s outstretched hand.

“Don’t this paralyze you?” smiled the Colonel, pointing to his shabby clothes.

“Clothes do not make the man,” observed the old gardener, still holding his friend’s hand.

“If they did, Ferguson ’ud be about th’ poorest excuse fer a human bein’ ever seen in these here parts,” commented the Colonel, with an old-time twinkle in his eyes.

“Why, what — what,” stammered Uncle Israel, “what does this all mean, Golden?”

“Means that Ferguson’s busted, an’ is on his way up ter git a fresh supply.”

“That great fortune gone so soon?”

“Correct.”

“Surely, Golden, not all?”

“Whole shootin’-match.”

“Impossible!”

“No danger now of that fortune a-ruinin’ my moral character.”

“Praise the Lord, you accept adversity with a stout heart.”

“Case of *have* to, Uncle Israel.”

"You still have your cheerfulness, I see."

"That an' th' burro." There was something so pathetic in the way in which the Colonel said this that Uncle Israel could not laugh at it.

"Well, I'm glad to see you, my friend. Come right in and I'll get you a bite to eat; you must be hungry," said Uncle Israel heartily.

"Hain't got no millionaire's hummin'-bird appetite, fer a fact. Got any arnicky? Heels a trifle sore — hain't got used ter trampin' yet. Say, this hain't much like th' way Ferguson come ter see you th' last time, is it? No more special cars fer him fer a while," the Colonel rattled away, not waiting for answers.

Uncle Israel led the way into the house, and soon the two were seated at table, Aunt Rebecca's absence being explained by the fact that on this particular afternoon there was a meeting of a political club of which she was president. Without apology the old man set out the best he could find in the pantry, and the Colonel ate heartily, stopping now and then to compliment this thing or that, and declaring that it was the best he had ever tasted.

"What's become of th' widder Harris?" he asked presently.

"She is still here. She is a most excellent woman — very industrious, and deserves much credit for the way she has brought up her family," replied Uncle Israel.

"Nice children?"

"Very. By the way, she often asks about you and Clarisse."

"Honest Injun? Glad she hain't fergot us."

The Colonel here took the last piece of bread on the plate.

"I guess she's found out who it was that paid off the mortgage on her house, and she wants to pay it back. She's very independent," observed Uncle Israel.

"Saved some money? Well, she's beat me out at that game."

"She is now able to repay you, and you had better go and see her."

"Why, it hain't possible she's saved up *that* much, is it?"

"I understand that a long time ago some unknown person sent her a big block of stock of the Wild Goose Consolidated Mining, Milling and Development Company, and that she drew dividends on it for quite a while, and a few days ago sold it for a very handsome sum."

"Gee whistifers! Hain't that bully fer her?"

"Very fortunate," assented Uncle Israel.

"Jest can't tell nothin' 'bout how things will pan out in this here country, Uncle Israel. Once had a lot of that there stock myself, but kept a-sloughin' it off here an' there. Reckon never got more'n a couple of months board an' a few boxes of cigars out of th' whole blamed shootin'-match. An' so th' widder's struck it rich, hey?" mused the Colonel, his mind reverting to the time when he had filled out and sent to Mrs. Harris the very certificate to which Uncle Israel referred.

"Yes, and I think you really ought to go and see her," repeated Uncle Israel.

"Think she'd care ter see me?"

"I'm sure she would."

"Hain't dressed up enough. Guess I'll wait till I come back down from camp; besides, she might think I'd come fer that money, an' I wouldn't have her think that fer th' world." And the Colonel moved as if to go.

"Surely, Golden, you're not going so soon. Stay overnight with me. You need the rest," urged Uncle Israel.

"Thanks. Ferguson must git a move on him; there's no time ter fool away," said the Colonel, tightening the cinch and giving the burro a preliminary prod by way of a signal to move on.

"Well, take care of yourself, and God bless you," said Uncle Israel, taking the Colonel's proffered hand and clasping it warmly.

"Say," said the Colonel, his face brightening, "when Ferguson strikes it rich agin—an' he will, sure as shootin'—he'll come right back here an' settle down, an' we'll build that Pickens Instertute, an' do all th' other fine things we've talked of, an'—but dreamin' cuts no ice. Good-by!"

"Good-by. Success to you, my friend!"

"See you later! Good-by," called back the Colonel from the side of the hill.

"Good-by!" echoed the old man.

Uncle Israel stood at his front door and watched the Colonel as he trudged slowly and limpingly along behind the heavily laden burro up the steep trail that winds along above the great cañon, and in and out among the scattering pines, and on past waterfalls, but ever skyward, to Oro Grande, that Mecca of men who would suddenly become rich. And when at last the Colonel was lost to sight, the old man, with a benediction on his lips, turned and went in.

CHAPTER XXVI.

ANOTHER DISCOVERY.

TWO DAYS later, the Colonel, tanned and weather-beaten, and wearing a heavy navy-blue flannel shirt belted in at the waist, corduroy trousers tucked into the tops of boots that laced part way down in front and with soles filled with rows of hob-nails, and a slouch hat drawn close to his eyes, ambled into the celebrated mining camp. Though footsore and weary, he unpacked a second-hand tent, which he at once set up, and before the sun had sunk to rest beyond the graveyard he had traded his burro for a deal table, a meal ticket, and a box of stogies.

Before stopping to rest or to eat he borrowed a pot of lamp-black and traced on half of a bed-sheet, in big, irregular letters:

GOLDEN S. FERGUSON.

MINES, REAL ESTATE, INSURANCE.

GRUB STAKES FURNISHED.

DON'T KNOCK.

WALK IN.

P. S.—KEEP YOUR EAGLE EYE ON ORO GRANDE.

He then stretched the sign above the entrance to the tent, and in a little while the "boys" began to gather round, and he was kept busy in handing out what he called "two-fers." Presently he said something about needing to wash his face and hands, and a quiet, miner-looking fellow said in a familiar voice:

"Colonel, won't you try some Nevada soap—mineral soap? I'll go get you a piece. I paid five hundred dollars for it, so it ought to be pretty good."

"Well, fer God's sake," exclaimed the Colonel. "Shake! Why, DeLancey, I heard that you 'd committed suicide by callin' a man a liar. Was a-gittin' a good an' ready ter drop a tear or two—perhaps three—on your sod whenever I 'd have th' good luck ter run acrost it. Now, this jest shows there hain't no sense in bein' previous an' a-tearin' hair fer folks on hearsay, no matter how much you 'd like ter b'lieve th' report," said the Colonel jocularly.

"Thanks. I assure you it would give me great pleasure to do as much for you, Colonel," retorted DeLancey with spirit.

"Gee! Listen ter that! There's *genuine* Colorado spunk fer you. Have a cigar. Why, say, you don't talk no more on the installment plan, do you? Don't jig your words, but jest let 'em slide over th' plates smooth without a ruffle. Gosh! Your Boston gang wouldn't know you, you're that improved. That's right!"

"Think so?"

"Know so. Say, honest Injun, you was about as soft a piece of tenderfoot as ever struck a minin' camp. Now, own up."

"Yes, I presume that's so. Do you know that I feel indebted to you, old man, for that advice you gave me that night—remember of telling me to stay in Colorado?"

"Don't mention it. Advice is cheaper'n alkali dirt. Any fool can give it, but sometimes it calls fer a wise man ter take it. Well, say, young feller, what air you a-doin' up here?" queried the Colonel.

"In business," answered DeLancey.

"Saloon or faro?" asked the Colonel, as though those two industries embraced the entire field of human effort.

"Neither; I have a mine," replied DeLancey.

"Shipper?"

"Yes, in a small way; it averages about one hundred dollars per day."

"A fool fer luck!" exclaimed the Colonel.

"Yes; that's what I said when I heard of the sale of the Holy Moses," returned DeLancey.

"Good fer you. Hit th' bull's eye!" cried the Colonel.

"My, how you've improved! Talk an' act like a man. Say, I'm right-down glad ter see you, son,—always thought you had some little ability if you could only jest git onto it."

"Thanks. You can't hurt my feelings. I appreciate what you've done for me. If it hadn't been for you, Colonel, raking in all of my money, I'd never have come here, and so would have missed getting the mine, for, had I had enough money to take me back home, of course I'd have gone that time; but as it was, I was ashamed to ask father for more, and so I came up here and struck it rich."

"Well," said the Colonel, reflecting, "I knowed all the time that 't was experience you needed, an' you must admit that you got it purty cheap, considerin'. Now, say, you know one good turn deserves another—can't you jest put th' old man onto somethin'? He's down on his luck."

"Well," said DeLancey, "just to show you that I'm not such a bad fellow as you used to think me, I'll pay your board till you get on your feet again."

"No, you won't. I've got a meal ticket, an' a coffee-

pot, an' bacon enough left fer two weeks. Ferguson is no beggar," replied the Colonel with a show of indignation.

"Then I'll give you something to sell on commission, and it's no pearl-producing project, either. How does that strike you?" said DeLancey.

"That's th' stuff—that's bus'nis; an' what th' old man wants is bus'nis, not charity. He was a-gittin' all rusted out down in Denver—feels ten years younger up here among th' rocks an' pines. This is life! I'd ruther be out here among th' boys an' do my own cookin' than ter live at th' Brown Palace fer nothin'. A miner's bunk may be hard, but there's nothin' wrong with his appertite; you can bet your life on that propersition!"

The Colonel then booked bargain No. 1, and presently rolled himself up in a heavy blanket, laid down upon the hard ground, and soon fell asleep, perchance to dream of a great fortune, of the Pickens Institute, and of a home.

Before long he was doing a thriving business, and had secured mining leases and options galore. Within a year he had formed a corporation with a very long name and a very large capitalization, conveyed to it all of his mining property in exchange for its capital stock, and shortly afterward left for London. He took with him a fine lot of specimens of roasted ore (all flecked with gold) packed in cotton in small boxes with glass lids, some beautifully lithographed certificates, and a prospectus (glowing with red and gilt headlines) wherein the properties were spoken of as "The golden legacy of Nature," and "The gold treasure-house of the Creator," *etc.*

Just before going abroad the Colonel called on Mrs. Harris, and found to his great astonishment that she was

none other than his sister Julia, whom he had long mourned as dead. It seems that, after the "accident" to her first husband, she, deeply feeling the disgrace of it, had moved away from the Springs, and afterward had married Harris, the conductor, and that they had, but a short time before his death, gone back there to live. And so it happened that, after the war, when the Colonel came in search of her, some evil-disposed person told him that she was dead, and even went so far as to point out a grave as hers, and to palm off on him a girl-baby whom that wicked person wished to be rid of. Mrs. Harris had little dreamed that the "Colonel Ferguson" of whom she had so often heard and read was her long-lost brother. The prefix of "Colonel" and the suffix of "Ferguson" is the sufficient explanation.

The reason for Golden Silvers changing his name has never been found out. No one who knows him believes that he ever committed a crime or sought to elude his creditors. Perhaps it was the disgrace that came to his family when his brother-in-law was hanged, for it is certain that he shortly thereafter enlisted as a volunteer in a Colorado regiment, and the roster of his company gives his name as "Golden S. Ferguson." Though not relevant, it may be added that his old comrades-in-arms remember him as a brave and gallant soldier.

CHAPTER XXVII.

AS ON A MOUNTAIN.

THE Colonel came back from Europe looking fresh and rosy. With him were some side-whiskered and titled gentlemen, and a mining expert, several hunting-dogs, and cases of guns and golf clubs, and much other paraphernalia usually found in the luggage of English sportsmen. They all came out from New York in a special car that had a basket of "Extra Dry" in its locker, boxes of fine imported cigars, and other things calculated to make a long trip endurable if not decidedly pleasant. No wonder the Colonel was ruddy, for salt air, a low altitude and champagne for several months had been a decided change for him.

And so, when he stepped lightly from the train at his old home, his best friends scarcely knew him, for he had grown a beard, and it was cropped and brushed in the latest English style, and he was arrayed in a nobby English suit of pronounced figure. Indeed, he was quite exotic, and looked many years younger than he did when he went away. And yet to an old friend he confessed that he was never so glad to get back to "God's country" since the time that he went over the Peak in the balloon.

In a little while the Englishmen bought the Colonel's mines, and he became a rich man—rated at over two millions; and for a while he spent money very freely, and indulged in many extravagances, of which a fine kennel was one of the smallest. He bought a fine house

on Millionaire Row, and with his sister went there to reside. They of course had all of the comforts and luxuries which money could buy. He enjoyed his sister's love and devotion, but, after such a long life of restlessness and roaming, he found it hard to settle down, and the new life of ease and idleness soon palled upon him. For a second time he found that a fortune of itself does not bring contentment and happiness. Even the building of the orphans' home and the prodigal giving to this and that charity did not suffice. There was something lacking, he knew not what.

And so in time he became (as many a rich man has) moody and misanthropic. He fancied that everybody was trying to defraud him of his fortune; that friendship was but a name, and that there was no such thing as gratitude.

Still, there was one in whom he had confidence, a man whose life was as pure and sweet as the blossoms he loved and tended. And so he went again to see old Uncle Israel, his former unfailing source of consolation; and when he had crossed the low rustic bridge near the greenhouse, he stopped to rest and to look at the distant mountains, so rugged and massive, so cheerless and forbidding. To him the old peak now seemed an eternal negative to hope, an unanswering sphinx to the questions of the soul. Then he thought of the time when, footsore and weary, he had come to this very place and found a hearty welcome and a sincere Godspeed.

He went nearer. The bay-window of the cottage had been transformed into a huge cage, and was filled with merry canaries that flitted and sang from perch to perch.

Again he stopped, and through the open door he heard a familiar voice singing a simple hymn in an undertone. He stepped inside, and a large, purring cat rubbed affectionately against his legs. There was a flood of sunshine in the small room, and the air was full of the fragrance of flowers and the melody of birds.

"Here is real contentment. I will buy this place and be happy," he thought.

Since his last visit Aunt Rebecca had died, and Uncle Israel was again living alone. That, notwithstanding his great affliction in the loss of his wife, Uncle Israel should still be cheerful, was to the Colonel incomprehensible.

Soon he was in earnest conversation with his good old friend, who listened attentively and sympathetically to the outpourings of his heart and appeal for help. The problem seemed too deep for words, and for a long time the two men stood holding each other's hands and were silent.

"It was Marcus Aurelius, was it not," said Uncle Israel presently, "who said that we should live as on a mountain? Perhaps, Golden, you don't live in that way. So many of us, my friend, do not look up, and so we miss many visions that we might have. Living as on a mountain means, I take it, living above the clouds. It is the life that does not worry, and that rests content each day with the cheerful doing of simple duties that brings its own reward and happiness. Some day, I fancy, we shall go on into a realm of perpetual sunshine — I don't know where — but it will be, I think, as on a mountain, all peaceful and glorious."

Then the old man went on to speak of the strenuous life, and the real happiness that comes of self-sacrifice — of the wondrous beauty of altruism, whose flower is the

pride of every moral philosophy and every religion destined to survive the ages. He did not preach, or seemed not to,—had he done that he would have repelled the Colonel; but he stated truths in such a simple, earnest way that they carried conviction to the heart, and his hearer accepted them without question.

And as the old man spoke, the Colonel looked into his friend's simple, earnest face and noted its beauty—the beauty that comes of a long life of goodness. And as he gazed upon the bent form and into that pure face, life seemed to take on a new meaning—the world seemed to be transformed.

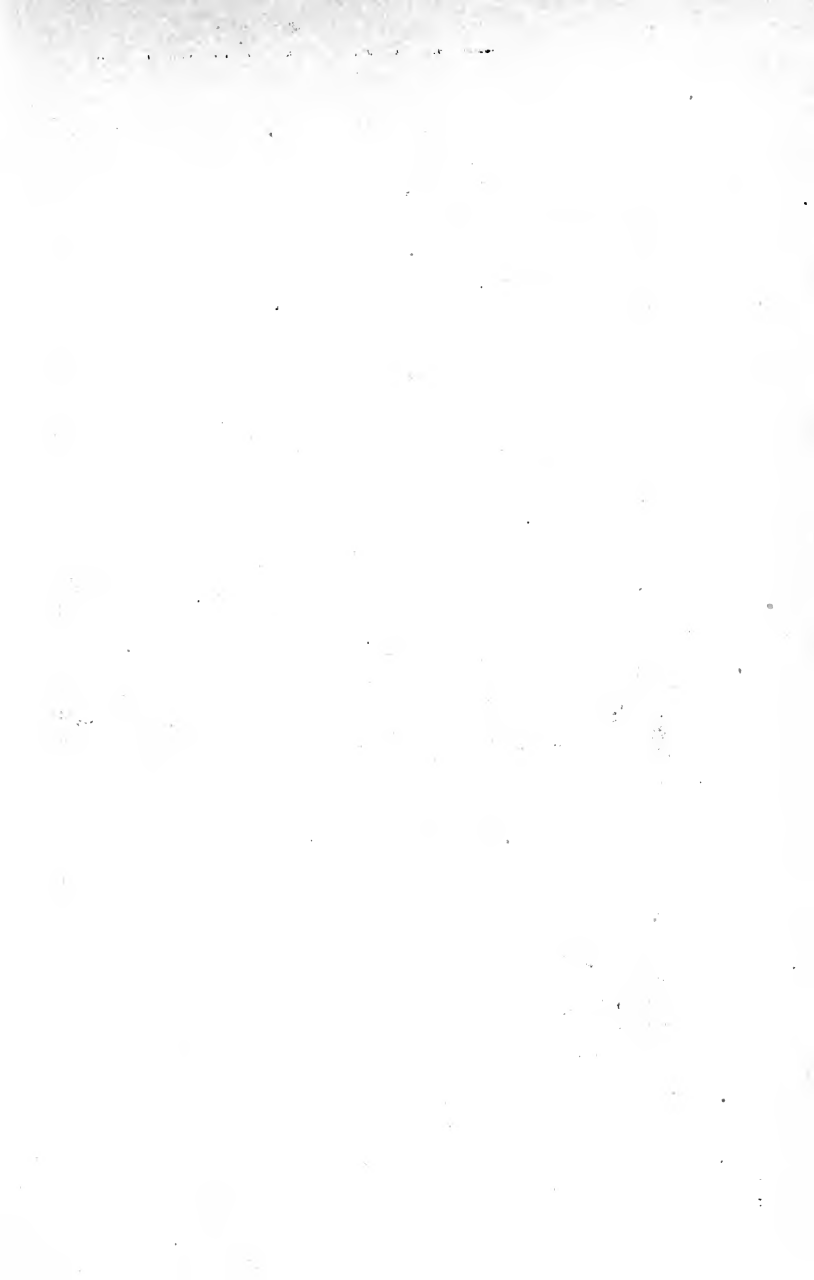
When the Colonel left the cottage he looked again at the mountains, and behold! they were bathed in a warm and mellow light, and it seemed as though heaven itself reached down and crowned the majestic head of the old peak with a sublime and supernal glory. And again, as on that other summer evening, there was a peacefulness all about.

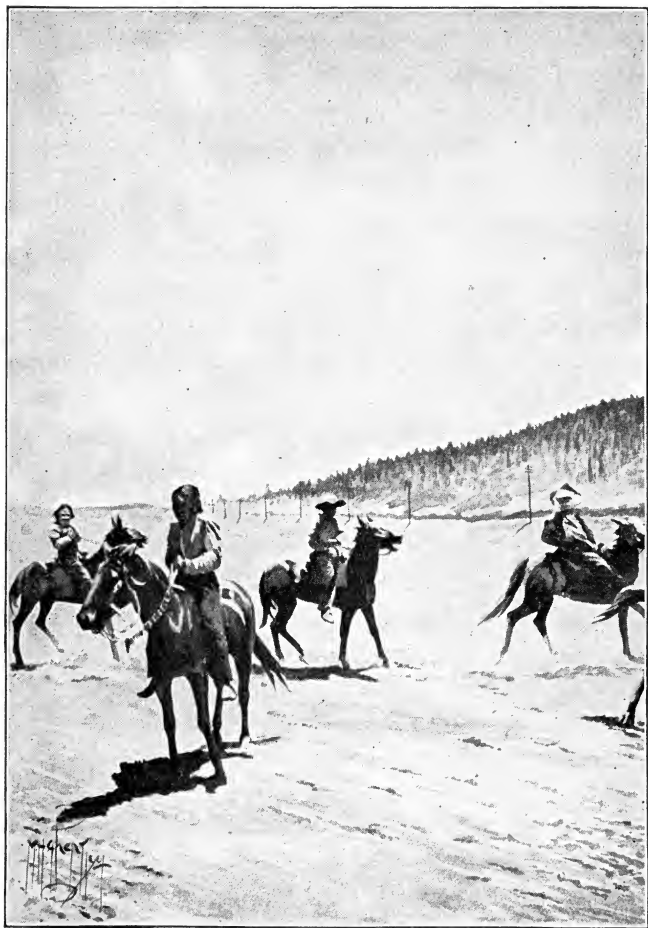
EPILOGUE.

IN the course of time the Colonel sold his fine house, and took his sister and her children and went to live with Uncle Israel Goodman. His great fortune is now being sacredly and unostentatiously devoted to such charitable objects as the two old friends from time to time decide to be worthy of help. They live in a very simple way, and seem to have found the true secret of all noble living, for the twilight of their lives is sweet and serene.

To this day Clarisse calls the Colonel "Uncle Goldy," and loves him as a niece should, and he will never deceive her.

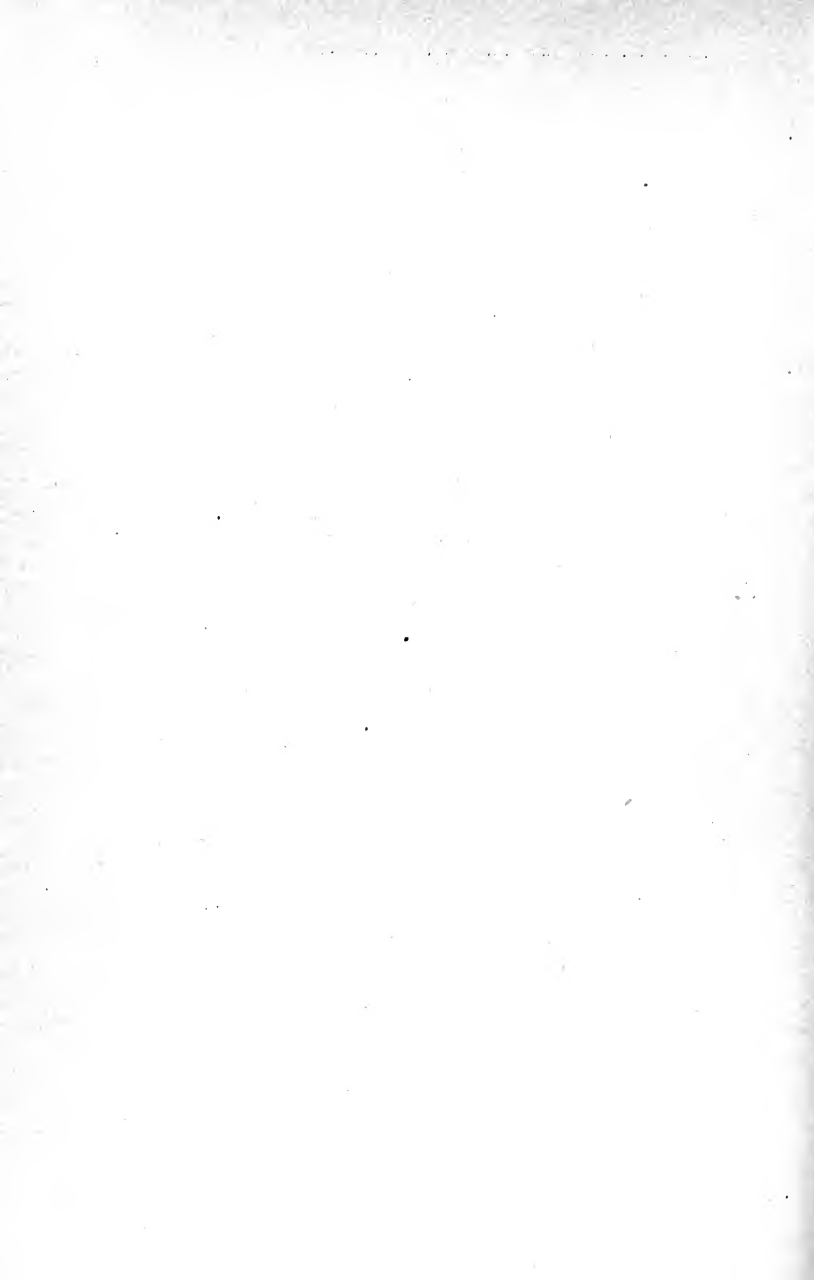
Adios con la colorada!





PREDATORY APACHES.

BOOK II.
OTHER SKETCHES.



OTHER SKETCHES.

The Bucking Bronco.



A SLANTING HURRICANE-DECK.

TO ENJOY a quiet smoke while riding a bucking bronco is a very difficult matter, because he is wont to keep his whole fretful frame on a curve, and the curve in constant motion,—a motion that is described in the vernacular of the Southwest as “galley-west and crooked,” a sort of frue-vanner action that is simultaneously vertical and lateral, rapid and rigid; consequently,

an inexperienced rider finds it extremely hard to stay on his slanting hurricane-deck for even a fraction of a second. It is said, indeed, after a bronco has once shown one how, that a person realizes that he can, by this route, reach the milky way quicker and see more and brighter constellations than he ever dreamed of, and that the flight of time is so rapid as not to be at all appreciable. To have a quiet

smoke from the back of a live bronco looks easy enough in a picture, but some artists exercise a license that is accorded to folk of an imaginative turn of mind. A cow-puncher would probably advise one to light his cigar afterward — if, perchance, he should then feel like it.



HAS SEVEN DEVILS.

The bucking bronco has seven devils and a spare: if you were to try to ride one, you would probably think him possessed of many more. The very incarnation of malevolent degradation and unsubdued passion, as well as a striking simile for stubbornness, he is utterly devoid of sympathy and full of bitterness. He provokes most prodigal and pyrotechnic exhibitions of profanity, and is probably

less of an altruist than any other animal of all creation. Ever true to the traditions of his tribe, he is exactly what his reputation calls for,—the most obstinate and ill-natured brute the Almighty ever made. He enjoys nothing better than to toss a would-be rider over his head quicker — as One-eyed O'Farrell might express it — than hell can singe an Apache!

In order to get well enough acquainted with this depraved outcast of the Western plains to mount to his back,

one must first seek an introduction by the aid of a blindfold. Then he is seductively demure and docile. But have a care! After the saddle is duly and doubly cinched, you mount, brace yourself, lean forward and pull up the blind from his eyes, and then — how could those seven devils and that spare get into his spine so quick! — with fallen pride and conceit all gone, you get up, brush the dust from your face and clothes, look meekly round to see who is laughing at you, and perhaps call for arnica, or something stronger.

The “bronco-buster” is the nervy and fearless cowboy who, in time, gets “onto” those curves, and plies whip, and digs in spurs, and tightly hugs with strong legs at every lurch and lunge. Up and down, forward and back, with curved back describing the arc of a circle, the bronco pitches ferociously and viciously, and with every mad plunge his head disappears between his rigid fore legs so far that the rider seems to be on the very verge of a precipice with not even so much as a twig at which to catch. It is just a question of skill and physical endurance, in which the brute is pitted against the man, — a fierce and dubious struggle from start to finish, and it is all over in a few seconds; but while it is on, everything must get out of the way or be run over; nothing can stop them. Careening across ditches, and leaping over corral fences, they madly go, the bronco determined to throw the man, and the latter as resolutely and stubbornly resisting, and vigorously thwacking the brute at every jump. Nothing can be more exciting; nothing more thrilling. If the bronco win, the man feels as though a cyclone had struck him; if the rider be victorious, the bronco looks as though life were a dismal failure and trusts and combines had come to stay.

But a bucking bronco is never tamed and never willing to submit long to tyrannous oppression; and so, with the very next adventurous fellow he tries his best to get even for all former indignities. And he usually succeeds, for he is a genius in his line,—he has a capacity for taking (and making) infinite pains.

Bronco-busting and steer-tying are among the accomplishments of many of the soft-hat and bespurred gentlemen of the range, and a Fourth-of-July celebration in the cow-country would hardly be complete without them; for what does the Declaration of Independence signify to the American citizen if he cannot on that occasion show to an onlooking and admiring world that he is a better man than the other fellow?



STEER-TYING.

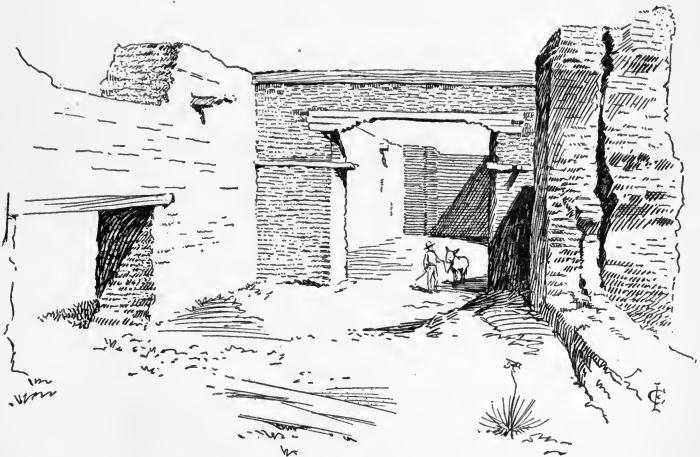
Quien Sabe?

A NEW MEXICO STORY.

I.

SCINTILLANT in sunshine, silent and slumberous, dewless and dreamy — such is New Mexico with its beautiful valleys, its far-stretching *mesas*, and its pine-clad mountains.

Nourished in a warm soil where little is yielded without artificial aid, her civilization is slow and sombre, as though in measured and melancholy protest against conditions which, though favorable in the extreme to easy existence, have yet stopped somewhat short of absolute perfection. In this land of *mananas* a stoical indifference to fortune is regarded as a grace, indolence condoned as something cli-



CRUMBLING WALLS.

matically inherent, and procrastination elevated almost to the dignity of a cardinal virtue.

A traveler by rail from Las Vegas to Santa Fé, as he approaches the crest of the Glorieta mountains, may, through scattering pines to the northward, catch glimpses of crumbling, earth-brown walls, which, according to tradition, were built long before Miles Standish courted the fair Priscilla. Making due allowance for the exaggeration of the natives in such matters, it must yet be very, very old,—this Pecos church whose altitude above the sea is quite eighteen hundred feet greater than the top of Mt. Washington. Bathed in an almost perpetual sunshine, these ragged ruins stand to-day as the only visible monument of a once numerous and probably prosperous, though now departed, people. Possibly it was here that the courageous Coronado camped during the winter of 1541 on that famous and foolish search of his for the fabled seven cities of Cibola, whose streets were supposed to be paved with gold.

Hard by the old church and nestling in the sun-kissed valley of the Rio Pecos (ordinarily a small stream, but at times a turgid torrent) there dwelt some years ago Don José Moreno, alcalde, merchant, ranchero, politician, saloon-keeper, and fast friend of the parish priest. Of course, he was surrounded by a considerable contingent of poor kin-folk living off his hospitality, for, by usage immemorial, a prosperous Mexican seldom gets beyond reach of less fortunate relatives.

The hand of the Don's only daughter, the dark and languorous-eyed Lalandá, was much sought after; partly, perhaps, on account of her personal charms, but mainly because of her father's far-famed riches. But one there



LALANDA.

was, the awkward Miguel, who with her had through all the years of their childhood watched the wondrous miracles of nature, —the springs that brought their splendid profusion of beautiful wild flowers, the summers that ripened the golden grain in the little fields, and the autumns that tinted with gorgeous coloring the mountain-sides. And so, wandering hand in hand, these two artless children grew to

feel, what they scarce could have described in words, that the law of natural selection had predestined them each for the other. To them the busy world beyond the sleepy valley was quite unknown save as tradition or the occasional return of the adventurous had given accounts of its splendor and squalor. Thus content with their humble and peaceful lot, they little dreamed that the coming of a railroad might bring that world so near that, though they should not go out to it, it would come in to them, and, perhaps, shape their destinies.

Is any civilization so primitive and hedged about as not to be affected by commerce. *Quien sabe?*

II.

When the civil engineers came to run the preliminary lines for the railroad they camped near Pecos, and soon one of their number, Elbridge Adams, spent much of his time at Don Moreno's store-saloon. No one there knew

the young man's history, but then, in frontier society, if one pay his debts and refrain from trumping his partner's trick, a pedigree is not required. Adams observed the usages of that society, and, moreover, the hearty grasp of his hand was evidence of a nature that quickly made friends for him; hence, he was received with wide-open arms by such society as there was on the Rio Pecos. He was the only son of a well-to-do widow residing in Boston, and had been sent west in the hope that a temporary experience there might check a certain pulmonary tendency, and, indeed, several months of outdoor life had so browned and tanned him that there was now no suggestion of hectic cheeks.

Now, Señorita Lalanda, sixteen years of age, was shy; so shy, in fact, that it was some little time before her existence was generally known to the surveyors, for at first she would peep curiously and cautiously through the deep casement of her window at the handsome young fellows and then hurriedly and guiltily retire to a dark corner to kneel on the bare ground and demurely count over and over again in silent penance the long string of black beads that hung from her full round neck. But as time went on she seemed to gain confidence, and sometimes she was seen timidly to venture in at her father's store on evenings when the particular *Americano* of her fancy came to buy tobacco. And soon, though the string of beads was as long and as black as ever and pendent from the same full round neck, they were — well, they were not counted at all.

And so it came to pass, before the summer was half over, that Lalanda was often seen in front of her father's house with her face turned away from the beautiful sun-

sets — away, too, from the direction of Miguel's home. She could, however, see anyone who might chance to approach from the surveyor's camp, and it often happened that, in going to the *acequia*, she would meet Adams, who cheerfully carried for her the half-filled earthen jar up the well-trodden path that led to her home.

Though he detested the cooking, Adams would occasionally accept the Don's invitations to dine, and at such times Lalanda in waiting on the table would stand opposite him and cast glances that he did not fail to observe. No wonder that the simple-hearted girl was impressed, for he could sing, dance, and play the flute, knew how gracefully to turn a compliment, was merry on occasion, and sentimental without apparent effort.

As for Lalanda, she had gone to a mission school where she picked up a smattering of music and English. Though she preferred her native tongue and the customs of her people to those of the foreigners, Adams believed that she could easily be educated to shine in a society where such physical charms must be at once recognized; and so he gave her lessons on the flute and fancied that in the notes which she so languidly produced he could detect evidences of a deep feeling; and, to him, her movements suggested the unaffected grace of the deer of the neighboring mountains. He pictured her as she would be, should he ever take her east, dressed in stylish and well-fitting garments; and he who has closely observed human nature must know how dangerous such reflections may become. And, too, is there not something in the very imparting of information to an eager young mind that draws a generous soul closer? Is it the recompense that superiority unconsciously makes for the homage of inferiority? *Quien sabe?*

III.

In due time the tinkle of Mexican spurs was superseded by the more rhythmic music of the American's tongue. Miguel frowned, Adams smiled; but the two did not often meet, for Lalanda had the cunning of her race and — sex. She knew that Miguel was slow; she would upbraid him for his remissness when it should be too late. Moreover, association with the American engineer seemed to have developed new qualities in her, or was it only the rousing of dormant ones? At any rate, she used not to dissemble: the confessional heard her inmost secrets — trivial transgressions though they were — but now she delighted in Miguel's discomfiture, and the memory of her first love vanished before the impetuosity of her new one like dew before a rising sun. The Bostonian, true to a puritanical training, kept his appointments with the precision of a train running on scheduled time, and she could depend on him to the minute. There were no periods of procrastination; no weary waitings. He calculated with almost mathematical exactness the probable resistance of each curve and grade, so to speak, in the course of his love-making, and had a formula for the speedy solution of every trying situation. In fact, he courted on much the same plan upon which railroads are built: having run preliminaries, the line was next located, and then the right of way obtained.

Lalanda's mother did not at first look with favor on the suit for her daughter's hand. She had a mother's intuition. Though not violent in her opposition, evidences of her disapproval were not lacking. Her countenance often conveyed more meaning than her words — a dis-

agreeable way which even some American mothers have, as many a fellow deeply in love and poor of purse can testify.

Adams was caught one time in a hard rain-storm and compelled to remain over-night at the Don's house. What a night it was! One can have no clear conception of it unless, perchance, he has spent a miserable night in a New-Mexican adobe, tossing and fuming, and possibly making use of such sizable expletives as the exigencies of the occasion seemed amply to justify. Slumber is never so sweet as after such a night. Ah, what can recompense a sleepless brain? To Adams there came an unexpected compensation. Finding sleep out of the question, he dressed, stole softly out of the door and thence under an



THE SERENADE.

open window that stood rather high above the narrow *patio*. Something (was the thought born of the wish?) seemed to say to him, "She is there." And, obeying the instinct of the heart (which Balzac says misleads as often as it guides), he began in low tones to pour forth his longings in — well, the music of love is the same in all languages, is it not? It needs no translation.

Presently, in answer to the serenade, a woman's figure appeared at the window,—long black hair falling in negligent profusion over well-rounded shoulders, and, leaning on her elbows (of course they were dimpled ones), she

carelessly let fall a bespangled hand which Adams eagerly grasped and pressed to his lips. He was in a transport of joy. "Reach down and kiss me," he pleaded in a semi-whisper, but the hand, as if suddenly taking alarm, was withdrawn, and the vision of surpassing loveliness disappeared from the pale light of the moon into the gloom of the room. Again and again he sang in tenderest strains, but there was no response — absolutely none. What would he not have given for a single sign or word of encouragement! He whistled lightly. Still no answer. How obdurate a girl can be! At length he went back to his room, to toss and tumble away the weary hours.

Next morning when he was alone with Lalanda he began to upbraid her for the heartless treatment of the night before, but she seemed surprised and not to understand. Then, happening to look at her fingers, he noticed that they were bare,—not a ring, not a jewel! At this juncture her mother happened in. He observed an evident embarrassment on her part, and also that her hands were round and plump, and — bespangled! Heavens! There was the very hand he had so rapturously kissed.

"Where are your rings?" he asked of Lalanda when again they were alone.

"Those I used to wear belonged to mother. Why?" she answered, speaking in Spanish.

"Oh, I — er — just wanted to know. They are very pretty; don't you think so?" said he in some confusion, and adding, "Do you think the storm is over?"

"I think it is," she replied quietly.

Things proceeded in the more or less even tenor of their way after that, and never a look of disapproval did Lalanda's mother give the young American. Her change of

attitude toward him will perhaps be understood by wives into whose lives the tender expressions of love came so long ago that the memory of them is as a dream. *Quien sabe?*

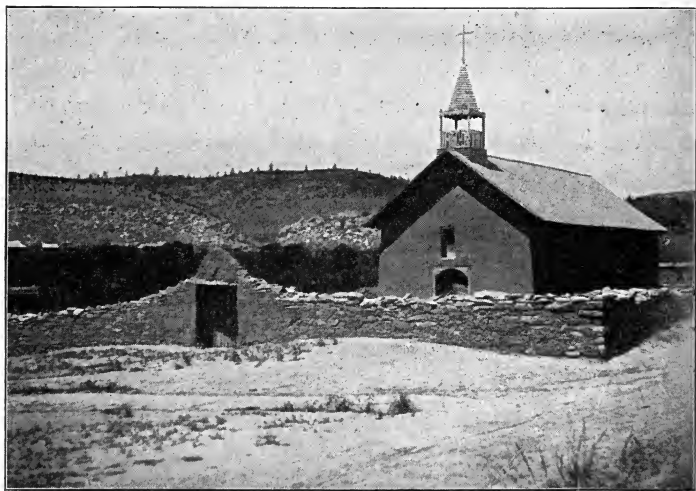
IV.

When, in a letter to his mother, Adams hinted at the existence of a very beautiful and bewitching *senorita* — “A perfect La-la,” he playfully put it — that worthy woman made a hasty call upon her friend, the president of a certain railroad company then extending its lines in the West, and the result of that call soon became apparent in New Mexico. Upon what a slender thread does human destiny depend! Had the young man’s mother not been so hasty, or had the president been out of town, or been a man of less decisive action, Adams might ultimately have tired of his new infatuation and gone back home and married the railroad president’s daughter, and thereby have greatly pleased his dear mother. But why speculate? The die was cast.

Adam never learned the real reason of his discharge from the company’s service, but he cared little. He was too proud to return home at once. Being a fellow of spirit, he was not easily daunted. Allured as many another has been by the clear skies and soothing air that make mere existence a pleasure, and by the unfettered freedom and the leisure of the place, he resolved to remain at the Rio Pecos and to carry out some half-formed plans for an ideal life. However iridescent it may be, it is pleasant to dream of wealth and ease. He would build a fine house on the big ranch (Lalanda’s dowry), hire herders for the thousands of sheep, import blooded stock with which to supplant the puny ponies; in short, live as would become the

son of a wealthy Don. What fun it would be to invite his eastern friends out to spend a summer with him! How they would open their eyes, and how chagrined his mother would be when she should learn of the prosperity of her precious prodigal!

But, pray, do not imagine that Adams's courtship was entirely mercenary — that he simulated his passion, for he was not a knave. There was, in truth, a fascination about this unsophisticated little native girl, quite inexplicable, which began with his first observation of her and grew steadily upon him. Her quiet, self-satisfied way, in striking contrast to his restlessness, was so soothing; and little



THE WEDDING WAS HERE.

he thought that, when the claws are sheathed, a cat's velvety paws are pleasant to the touch.

In due time a wedding was announced to take place at Don Moreno's. There were no cards, but the nuptials were

celebrated with the customary fandango. The old Don was the life of the party, or was until he curled himself up in a corner of the room and found oblivion in sleep too deep to be disturbed by the monotonous tread of whirling feet, the rasping strains of the fiddle, or the strident voice of the caller. Mexican wine is a most potent soporific, and, when mixed with certain other native beverages, is said to possess the conspicuous merit of making one so stupid that he seldom becomes vicious.

“The bride’s trousseau?” Well, negatively speaking, there was no “going-away gown,” no “perfectly lovely lingerie,” no “dreams” or “poems” in this article or that. The wedding-dress was of silk, and sufficiently gaudy to have satisfied the taste of an Apache. A few silver spangles at her wrist and in her hair, a filagree brooch, also of silver, at her throat, were the ornaments. Her corsetless figure had that amplitude of waist-line so much admired in the Venus di Milo, and a well-rounded bust suggested a maturity of Nature’s perfect work,—charms not detracted from by loose-fitting garments.

It should be stated that up to this time the Don had not heard of Adams’s dismissal from the railroad service. Whether that wedding would ever have taken place, or how the Don took his disappointment when at last he heard of the fact, or what he said and how he said it, are things that may be conjectured, but — *quien sabe?*

With or without express invitation, Adams and his bride, in pursuance of a time-honored custom, took up their abode with the bride’s father, whose disposition to make the best of a questionable bargain may account for the fact of his son-in-law soon being installed as clerk in his store-saloon.

V.

Time wore on. The surveyors moved westward over the mountains, on across the table-lands, on through the sandy valley of the Rio Grande, on past the Indian pueblos and the red-tinted mountains of Arizona, on over barren wastes and hot deserts,—ever onward, till at last they saw the setting sun sink into the placid bosom of the Pacific. Following in their tortuous trail came the graders and track-layers, and then the locomotive from the far-away Atlantic, puffing up the glittering steel ribbons that wound in graceful curves through the pine-clad parks, and then it too hurried on to the great western sea. And yet the olden-time “rapid transit in New Mexico,” as the surveyors dubbed the burros—those woolly and woe-begone remnants from the bargain counter of creation—was not superseded. Hence, when Lalanda and her husband journeyed to Santa Fé, instead of traveling by rail “D. H.” as Don Moreno had fancied they would, they used the old way, which all voted safer if not so expeditious, for a burro had never yet been known to fly the track or collide with anything.

Adams tried to Americanize things in his new home, but soon gave up in despair, having learned that the customs of a people are not so easily set at naught, however better ways there may be of doing things. Often he longed for the delicacies of his mother’s table, and then fell to and ate in gloomy and meditative silence the mutton and chili, the tamales and tortillas, which his wife had prepared *a la mode*.

Judged alone by her exactions, by the monopoly of his time, or by her jealousy, Lalanda was indeed much in love

with her husband. But let him incur her displeasure and there was unsheathing of sharpest claws. Did the course of their love chance to run smoothly, she was a most willing slave, and his slightest wish it was her pleasure to gratify.

For one reason or another Adams's vivacity faded away; his conversation became monosyllabic, his manner moody, and his dress shabby, but he never was heard to complain of shortcomings in his wife, if, indeed, they were the causes of his melancholy,—a quality that may incline some unhappy American wives who read his history to overlook some faults of his that have yet to be set down.

VI.

What became of the rejected Miguel? Did he unsheathe a keen stiletto and plunge it to the very hilt into his hated rival? Ah, no. Miguel had no stiletto, and could borrow none without the trouble of a search. Though he may have contemplated revenge in murder or in suicide, he did no overt act in the direction of either. He procrastinated. Perhaps the wounds of love, as do those of the flesh, cicatrize rapidly in a dry climate. *Quien sabe?*

Adams, being conscious of Miguel's hatred, kept a close watch on his movements, and at first was disturbed not a little, and took the precaution of going armed. But as time went on, Miguel's affections seemed to be reciprocated in another quarter, and so he felt less annoyance and relaxed his vigilance, for a man becomes used to danger as he does to physical pain.

After a while Miguel wedded his cousin and went to live at her father's house not far away, and there, during the long summer days, he was wont to sit in the shade of a

long, low porch and roll and smoke innumerable cigarettes in sheerest indolence.

One day an American who had introduced at Pecos the rather startling innovation of a saw-mill engaged Miguel in conversation. This nabob had had an altercation with Adams over a game of cards, and was filled with resentment.

"You Mexicans," said the mill-owner, addressing Miguel, "reverse some of our American sayings; for instance, you never do to-day what you can put off till day-after-to-morrow."

"Yes," assented Miguel with an exasperating indifference and rolling another cigarette.

"You're never in such a hurry to get rich that you kill yourselves with overwork, are you?" he pursued in a vein of amiable irony.

"No," grunted Miguel.

"What do you do when these Americans come among you and marry your women? I'll tell you. You just sit down and — roll another cigarette. Eh?" The American cast a swift glance to observe the effect of his taunt, and added, malevolently, "Know what I'd do, were I in your place? I'd *kill* him! *Sabe?*"

Miguel's brow clouded, but he made no answer, and the mill-owner moved on.

Next day Adams was casting a fly here and there, as he wandered along the Rio Pecos, and was paying the attention to his surroundings which an interested fisherman does, when suddenly he heard a crackling of bushes behind him. Turning a swift glance in the direction of the noise, he caught a glimpse of his old rival, half concealed, revolver in hand. Realizing in a flash the situation, Adams, with

a coolness born of emergency, stepped boldly out into the opening that lay between the clump of bushes and himself, and Miguel advanced slowly.

"Hello, there!" shouted Adams, gruffly.

"How!" grunted Miguel.

"What do you want?" demanded Adams, sternly.

Miguel made no answer; he was now standing but a few paces away, and the sunlight glinted the steel of the revolver's barrel.

"If you're coward enough to take advantage of a defenseless man, shoot away, and be damned!" said Adams, coolly.

The swarthy Mexican, advancing a few steps, said, "You stole my girl. One of us got to die. Take this, count off ten steps, turn and shoot," and he tossed a six-shooter to Adams, who slowly and carefully examined it, cocked it, and started off, counting deliberately as he went, "one, two, three, four, five, six, sev —"

"Hold!" rang out a clear voice, and Lalanda rushed in between the two men.

"Give me the guns," she demanded, her voice quivering with emotion. So dumfounded were the men that they obeyed without a murmur.

"Shame on you!" she cried, addressing Miguel. "You would kill my husband, my children's father. You — you —"

Miguel tried to stam-



"YOU STOLE MY GIRL."

mer out a defense, but the dramatic figure before him caused the words to die on his lips, and he skulked off among the bushes. Then Adams, coolly preparing a fly, said with a frown,

“How came you here?”

“I ran,” she answered, sinking exhausted to the ground; for, having discovered that her husband had left his revolver at home and that Miguel had followed him, she had felt that there would be trouble, and so had hurried after them.

“You saved your old Mexican lover’s life,” blurted Adams, casting a fly upon the water while Lalanda buried her face in her hands and began to sob.

“Why didn’t you stay at home?” he demanded petulantly.

“*Quien sabe?*” she cried.

VII.

It is Sunday. People for miles around have gathered in — some in wagons, some on burros, more on foot. The gentle voice of the little bell beneath the small white cross that points heavenward summons them to worship. The store-saloon is closed, and a few ragged, idle men, aimlessly smoking, sit on the bare ground in front of its whitewashed walls, now and then shifting positions to relieve their cramped limbs. A burro with drooping ears seems to be quietly listening, and the spicy, appetizing fragrance of burning piñon wood is in the smoke that gracefully curls upward in the thin air. How peaceful the scene! How very quiet it is, this bright summer morning! Could there have been a carousal and gambling here last night? Adams is standing just beyond the old bake-oven, that oval

and smoke-discolored earthen mound which looks like the segment of a monstrous shell of prehistoric incubation, gazing abstractedly at the lazy burros; and the Mexicans are conversing in low tones, ever and anon casting furtive and menacing glances toward him.

"A bad day for us was it when the Americans came," observed one, *sotto voce*, to his companions.

"Thou sayest well, Pedro," said another, adding, "Our people were contented and happy in the old days; we got good prices for our wool, and we made much money with our ox-teams freighting over the great plains before the railroad came."

"Do you not remember," rejoined the first speaker, "how happy was the Don's little girl? Ah, Lalanda looks not so now! And poor Miguel, the light-hearted boy — his heart is now heavy, and they say that his wife is not happy, because he thinks so much of Lalanda. *Mal dia!*"

"Tell us, Pedro, what think you will be the result of all these things?" queried a third tentatively.

"*Oh, Dios mio! Quien sabe?*" replied Pedro, stretching his rheumatic limbs and making a deprecating gesture.

Just then Lalanda passed by, her eyes cast upon the ground. Though she may have been conscious of Miguel following, she did not raise her eyes. Entering the church, she crossed herself with holy water and assumed her customary place. Somehow she felt that Miguel was in the seat behind her. Was it the unerring intuition of love? Though he had not spoken to her since her marriage touching his sentiments for her, he felt that she well understood them, and that she realized her mistake in marrying Adams.

VIII.

Poco tiempo. A dark cloud hangs over the sombre, pine-clad mountains of the upper valley, and the drowsy droning of bees drifts in at the open windows of the church, emphasizing an oppressive and ominous silence. The services have closed, and the people pass out, cross over the grassless plaza, and go down the red, sandy road which winds along between irregular rows of high adobe walls to the old log bridge that spans the Rio Pecos. There is a tiny thread of water in the river, but there has been a cloud-burst at Cooper's, twenty miles upstream, and the natives well know what may be expected.

Presently the sullen roar of distant water is heard, and all is excitement and expectation.

"It is coming! It is coming!" shout the children in Spanish as they scamper across the bridge to the side of their homes. Soon the water comes surging round the bend, a silvery fringe cresting the turbulent torrent, and pieces of timber from broken bridges and newly-cut railroad ties toss and tumble in impetuous confusion. The old priest and his little flock, gathered close about, gleefully shout a parting "*Adios!*" as they see some familiar object swept away by the swift-flowing waters, which grow rapidly deeper and deeper, as if welling up from the river's very bed, while the bridge curves with the pressure of driftwood as the water swishes up threateningly between the round pine logs of the floor.

Look! The further end of the old structure has swung into the stream. See! A woman has started to cross. The crowd shout and gesticulate wildly for her to come back, but she seems confused and hastens her steps. Some

one cries out, "'Tis Miguel's wife!" and a man is seen to rush toward her. Yes, it is Adams, whose pockets are yet swollen with money won at gambling. Without thought of self he hurries on, grasps her arm and turns, but alas! it is too late, for the hither side of the bridge has now broken its moorings and retreat is cut off. Heaven have mercy! The doomed couple grasp each other's hands and look appealingly toward the shore. They see the dear old padre on his knees, his face uplifted, and the sunlight glinting his beautiful white hair.

Hark! 'Tis the creaking and grinding of logs as they toss and swirl, and separate, and strike against one another, and plunge and fall and rise again in the relentless waters. Is there no help for the perishing couple? No, absolutely none. Another brief moment and the dreadful suspense will be over, forever over for them, and then shall come — what? Peace to broken lives? Yes, but what more? Ah, *quien sabe?*

Yet, in that short space between time and eternity, another glimpse is permitted — nay, say rather inflicted, for just as the angry waves engulf them they behold Lalanda clinging to Miguel, her arms round his neck, her head on his shoulder, and her face buried in the folds of a black mantilla. He has regained his sweetheart; she, her lover.

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Two unpainted pine boxes are being slowly and laboriously carried by four strong men followed by a string of men, women, and children, and headed by the faithful old padre. At intervals of rest those in the sad and solemn procession erect small piles of stones beside the path, and above each put a little cross,—monuments that will ever attract the eye of the passer-by. Presently, up among

the odorous pines, the fresh, gravelly earth takes the form of two oblong mounds, and there the low whisperings of the evergreens recall to the natives sweet memories of the quiet and peaceful yesterday, while ever and anon there come the rumble and shriek of the locomotive hurrying on with the world's commerce.

Which is the better—the Then, or the Now? *Quien sabe? Quien sabe?*

The Eagle and the Jack-Rabbit.



EAGLE AND JACK RABBIT.

ONCE upon a Time a Jack-Rabbit, who was Traveling leisurely across a Broad Expanse of Prairie, suddenly noticed a Shadow fall upon his Path, and, looking Up, he beheld high above him a great Eagle.

"If I could only Travel as he does, how Happy I should be," he Mused to himself as he Journeyed onward.

Presently the Eagle swooped Down, and Came so very Near that the Jack-Rabbit bethought Himself to take Refuge beneath a little thorny Bush that fortunately Chanced to be at Hand, and there he Stood all Quaking with Fear.

"My Friend," said the Eagle, seating himself upon a Rock, "don't be Frightened. You and I have been Neighbors for a great many Years, and it is Time that we were becoming better Acquainted. I occupy a different Sphere from yours, but still we are Creatures of the same world, and our Maker did not Intend us to be Unsocial."

The Jack-Rabbit hearing this friendly Speech, he breathed easier, and the Eagle continued:

"I have often Observed your Magnificent Legs and

how swiftly they carry you over the Ground, and I have also Admired your beautiful large Ears, which must Enable you to hear very much; and so I have come to Pay you a friendly Visit and to Talk over with you a little Matter of Business. It is this: I have long Thought that if you and I were to become Copartners, we could get On in this Cold and Cruel World much better than we Do."

"How so?" queried the Jack-Rabbit, feeling highly Complimented to think that the mighty Eagle should condescend to speak to him.

"Why, can't you see? I have Wings and only two Legs; you have four Legs, but no Wings. Now, if we were to Unite our Capital, you would have both Legs and Wings, which would surely be a great Advantage to you. Combination and Consolidation is the Order of the Day now in the Commercial World. I decry the Evils of the Trust as much as anybody does, but at the same Time I recognize the Fact that Self-Protection is Imperative. The sharp Competition that everywhere exists Compels us to have a Care lest we be forced out of Business. The survival of the Fittest is a very pretty Doctrine, but it is rather hard on such Creatures as you," argued the Eagle earnestly.

The Jack-Rabbit thought of the fierce struggle that he had, first to get Food, and next to Keep from being Devoured by Others, and Marveled why an All-wise Providence had so Ordained. Though quite Allured by the Eagle's fine Speech, yet, out of an abundance of Caution, he resolved to Conceal for the Moment his Desire to form an Alliance with him, and in this he showed Wisdom.

"Let me explain," continued the Eagle, scratching his aquiline Nose with a Toe. "You, sir, could easily Catch

sufficient Food for us Both, and then, upon a preconcerted Signal from you, I would Drop quietly Down from the Clouds and sail away with you to a remote Place where we could Dine together all by Ourselves, and where your Enemies, the Coyotes, could not Molest you; and besides, you would much enjoy a Ride through the cool, fresh Air with me every Day, would you not?"

"Indeed, that would be Delightful," admitted the Jack-Rabbit with ill-concealed Enthusiasm, "but would you, yourself, not Devour me? I greatly fear me that you might."

"Your question, my Friend, shows that you are prudently Cautious, a most excellent Quality in a Partner. See! I have no Teeth," answered the Eagle, at the same time Opening wide his Mouth so that the Jack-Rabbit could See that he told the Truth, the whole Truth, and nothing but the Truth.

"True enough; but would you not Let me Fall when you should Get me up among those high Clouds?" ventured the Jack-Rabbit timidly, and adding, "I admit that I should like very much to get out of this alkali Dust once in a while and to Travel as Fast as you Do."

"There would not be a Particle of Danger," replied the Eagle, smiling at the Rabbit's Incredulity, "for my Talons are as strong as Steel, and I never drop Anything—not even a Stitch. I do not wonder that you should want to Soar aloft as I do—to pierce the vast Empyrean where you can look down with Pity upon the miserable, struggling World. It is a great Opportunity that I offer you, and you should Remember that Opportunity knocks but Once at each Person's door.

"Now, Friend, if you will be so Good as to Come out

into the Open for a Moment I will show you how I could Manage It. And then, if you don't Think that Flying surpasses Traveling on Foot, you need not Enter into the proposed Arrangement." And he looked as though it were a Matter of utter Indifference to him.

"I do not doubt your great Strength, but Instead of your Holding me with your Talons, I might take hold of your Feet with my Teeth, and then, if I should let Go, it would be my own Fault," suggested the Jack-Rabbit frankly.

"But, my dear Friend, do you not see that your Teeth are so very Sharp that they would pull right through my Feet on account of your great Weight, and that would Mean sure Death to you," explained the Eagle, making a mental Note of the Jack-Rabbit's size.

"I had not Thought of that. How very, very Wise you are!" remarked the Jack-Rabbit admiringly.

"Some folks are good enough to Say so," smiled the Eagle modestly, adding: "There is yet another Reason why I could not seriously Think of permitting you to Do as you propose, and that is I am, as you Know, the Emblem of Freedom, and I could ill Afford to lower the Dignity of my exalted Position." And the King of the Air drew himself Up and ruffled his Feathers until he seemed to be the very Personification of Majesty.

"No, I suppose not," said the Jack-Rabbit, duly Impressed and taking a Step toward the Eagle, who Encouraged him thus:

"What would Folks say if they saw you Clinging to me? Naturally they would Ridicule me, and say that I was no longer their proud Bird of Freedom, and then I should be Ruined — completely Ruined! So, however willing I

otherwise might be to Accommodate you, I must, you see, Maintain my National Reputation at all Hazards." And he seemed to be sore Distressed at the unfortunate Situation.

Not suspecting Anything, the Innocent and Trusting Jack-Rabbit then came slowly Out, and the false Eagle darted at him and thrust his sharp Talons into his Back, which caused him to scream with Pain. The Eagle, however, paid no Attention to the sad Plight of the Rabbit, but, on the contrary, flew rapidly away to his far-distant Eyrie, where, over the dead body of the poor little Animal, he Delivered a Lecture to his assembled Family on the Ethics of modern Business Methods, the substance of which may be Epitomized into this heartless Motto: "Get there, or get off the Earth!"

MORAL (for people of the Jack-Rabbit kind): Don't be in a hurry to form a copartnership with another simply because he travels at a faster pace than yours: high-flyers are not always to be trusted.

A Cat Creek Conversion.

[Overland Monthly.]

DURING the long winter evenings frontier society in Colorado has two unfailing sources of entertainment,—dances and revivals; and their appearance in camp with the coming of the snows can be predicted with unerring certainty. When they come separately, no one may be seriously disturbed, but let both prevail at the same time, and—well, as a Cat Creek fellow would put it, “The very devil is to pay.”

It so happened in this particular year that the first dance of the season on Cat Creek signalized the appearance of a brawny and brave young evangelist, who, by the way, was to be entertained at the house of the postmaster,—the very place where the young folks had planned to have their dance.

Now “Sister Jarvis,” the postmaster’s wife, was a member of the church, but so good-natured was she that she could never find it in her heart to refuse the use of her dining-room when the young people asked for it. Equally ready was she to give it for “protracted meetin’s,” and heretofore she had been able to manage dates so there should be no conflict, but this time she was in a dilemma,—the preacher had come unexpectedly. And his coming was embarrassing for other reasons. Old Glassy Thompson, the one-eyed fiddler, had been engaged to come from the Upper Cat, and the country had been scoured from Tipton’s ranch to the Citizens’ ditch for “calico.” Therefore it was quite out of question to postpone the affair.

So the evening for the dance came on, and with it young men in high-heeled boots, corduroy suits, and navy-blue shirts,—some with girls, but more alone,—and soon a string of restive broncos tied to the railing in front of the postoffice (which was the Jarvis residence as well) attested the fact that the revival or the dance, or both, had been well “given out.”

When the young preacher learned of the proposed dance, he conceived a brilliant *coup d'etat*,—he would thwart Satan, he would capture the sinners, and turn the affair into a praise service. He confided his plans to Sister Jarvis, who could do nothing less than promise to aid him, though she feared for their success. Shortly after supper the decks, so to speak, were cleared for action; that is, the dining-room table was taken out, and rows of chairs and benches brought in. Presently, a handful of zealous souls led by Sister Jarvis were lustily singing “Hold the Fort!” The singing, of course, attracted others, and soon the room was pretty well filled, the major portion of the audience being of an age and disposition that would undoubtedly prefer a dance to a religious meeting. There was an air of sullen decorum.

Stuttering Jack, a big-fisted prospector, sat on the last row, next to Maria Jarvis, the postmaster's buxom daughter. He had come all the way from his cabin, a distance of over twenty miles, but then he thought nothing of that,—he would have gone twice as far almost any time could he sit alongside of the girl who, to him, quite monopolized the womanly beauty and virtues of Conejos county.

After several songs had been sung, the minister rose, opened his Bible, unsheathed a six-shooter, placed it on

the stand before him, and said, "We will proceed to worship God."

He then took a text from the gospel according to Saint John, and preached a sermon on the duty of self-sacrifice. It was a strong appeal for unselfishness in human conduct, and abounded in homely illustrations well calculated to stir to the depths the feelings of his hearers. He was what the unregenerate of Cat Creek would call "a stem-winder," — a compliment intended to convey an idea of superior ability and endurance.

Ten o'clock came and the preacher had not yet passed the fifth sub-head of the sixth proposition. There had been no "And lastly, my hearers," so that the end of the discourse was not yet in sight. There was a growing uneasiness among the younger members of the little congregation. The "music" had slunk out and slunk in again several times, and it really began to look as though there would be no dance there that night. Finally, a voice called out:

"Practice what yer preach!"

The minister stopped and looked about expectantly, and a tall, sinewy miner rose and said:

"Parson, I'm the feller what said it. I 'low you're a right smart o' a preacher an' a well-meanin', and could run her on till daybreak, an' so beat us out on our shindig. I admires a feller thet wins out; there's none likes sech more'n me; but thet's one thing. Now, we've heered a good deal o' talk here to-night 'bout th' self-sacrificin' business, an' ef you'll jest practice what yer preaches, why, we kin have what we come fer; an' I don't see as it's askin' too much fer them as hez been a-sacrificin' on this side o' th' house all evenin'!"

When the speaker had finished and sat down, a look of intense expectancy spread over the faces of all. The minister cast a swift glance at the revolver lying beside the open book, and was ready for the disturbance which he had been advised might be expected in case he undertook to hold the room beyond midnight.

"I wish to observe," he said coolly, "in answer to the brother's remarks, that I came here to preach the Gospel, and I propose doing so regardless of any and all interruptions. As to the suggestion that I ought to practice what I preach, I wish to state unequivocally that I stand ready to do so. I'm ready to sacrifice my life here and now, if need be, rather than that Satan shall go on with his wicked work here to-night. I've got the floor, and I shall keep it. [Cries of "Amen!"] My religion is of the fighting kind, and if any brother wants to be accommodated, just let him step up to the front like a man. I'll convert him if I can, but I'll lick him if I must, and it will all be done to the glory of God!"

As he finished, the preacher stepped forward and stood erect and defiant—a picture of self-containment. The miner muttered something to himself and made a sullen movement. There was great excitement, and the stalwart figure of Stuttering Jack sprang toward the fellow who had caused the disturbance. In the tumult of voices such expressions as, "'T aint Christian," "'T is," and "You're another," might have been singled out. The minister alone was cool and collected. Then the tall miner made use of some language to which Jack took exception as soon as he could get his tongue in approximately fair working order.

"I say," shouted he, "t-t-t-t-that no g-g-g-g-gentleman

would t-t-t-t-talk t-t-t-t-that-a-way in the p-p-p-p-presence of l-l-l-l-ladies!"

Nothing, perhaps, causes a mountaineer to fight so quickly as to be called "no gentleman" in the presence of women. And so, in a trice the tall miner and Stuttering Jack were at it rough and tumble. There was no impediment in the latter's movements though there was in his speech. In less time than it takes to tell it, Jack had his antagonist down and was pummeling him soundly, when, happening to look up, he saw at his elbow Maria Jarvis. The look she gave him was enough. He loosened his grip on the prostrate man's throat, got up, and stammered out a most humble apology for fighting "in the p-p-p-p-presence of l-l-l-l-ladies."

At last, peace being restored, the preacher quietly called for the contrite to come forward to the mourners' bench. Another appeal and yet another failed to secure a single response, but Maria Jarvis clutched nervously at the arms of her chair and moved restlessly.

"I'll go for'ard if you will," she whispered to Jack, who had managed to seat himself again by her side.

"M-m-m-m-me!" he ejaculated in a sort of gatling-gun discharge of letters.

"You'd orter, Jack," she pleaded, touching his strong arm gently.

"I'd l-l-l-l-like to, but —"

"For my sake, Jack." She let her plump hand rest a moment caressingly on his, and then with bowed head she went forward while the audience was singing,

"While the lamp holds out to burn."

Jack felt that every eye in the house was now upon him, and that the next line,

“The vilest sinner may return,”

was aimed directly at him,—it could not have reference to Maria, for she was the purest thing God had ever made. In another moment Jack ambled forward and dropped on his knees before Maria, who in the transports of a new emotion clasped his big hand tightly and sobbed as if her heart were bursting.

Presently the minister said, “Let us rise and sing the Doxology.” And as the people stood up and began to drawl out the familiar hymn, old Glassy came in again at the rear door, and as Mother Jarvis let go of the final note—she was always a beat or so behind—he took out his violin from its hiding-place beneath his great-coat and began tuning it preparatory to the dance which he supposed would now follow. Jack, hearing the twanging of the strings, rushed over to him and said excitedly:

“Here! you p-p-p-p-p—” Glassy ducked his head as if to escape the volley of Jack’s consonants—“p-p-p-put up that old f-f-fid-fid-fiddle! Do you hear *me*? There hain’t goin’ to be no d-d-d-dance!”

“Why not? Meetin’s out,” protested the old fiddler, anxious to begin earning his night’s wage.

“’Cause I’ve got r-r-r-re-re-religion; that’s why!” shouted Jack explosively.

Glassy looked aghast, returned the lump of rosin to his pocket, reluctantly picked up his traps, and bolted for the door, remarking as he went, “Well, this does beat h—l!”

The fiddler’s remark was heard by the sharp ears of the minister, who said in a cheery voice as he grasped the

old fellow's hand, "Brother, I don't approve of your language, but I think you've arrived at a correct conclusion. Come again to-morrow night; we'll be glad to see you."

And so, instead of the dance, there was an experience meeting, at which both Maria and Jack openly professed religion, and there was great rejoicing. Mother Jarvis said it was the happiest day she had seen since the great camp-meeting on the Wabash, back in Indiana, when she as a girl had sought and found forgiveness of sins, and that she should never again permit her house to be defiled by such a wicked thing as a dance.

After the services were over, the two new converts held a little experience meeting of their own at the doorstep of the postmaster's house, at which, beneath the soft light of the moon, Maria unhesitatingly and trustingly placed her hand in Jack's, and he was filled with a great joy.

The Backsliding at Cat Creek.

“Don’ fiddle dat chune no mo’, my chile,
Don’ fiddle dat chune no mo’;
I’ll git up an’ taih up dis groun’ fu’ a mile,
An’ den I’ll be chu’ched fu’ it sho’.”

THE young preacher had closed the “protracted meetings,” and had moved on to other strongholds. Despite the many sermons he had preached, aimed at the sin of backsliding, it came to pass that, before the snows had entirely disappeared from the mountains, Satan had somehow got possession of the feet of the young people at Cat Creek. The paroxysms of religious excitement there, though intense while they were on, were never of long duration, and it was often the case that converts after a short period of fervor and enthusiasm were as ready to slip back into the pernicious ways of the world as they had been to renounce them — an observation that may, perhaps, apply to many another locality.

“Young folks will be young folks,” explained Maria’s amiable father, who, although past sixty, had never been able to forget his youth, “and you kain’t keep a bouncin’ gal down when it’s born in her no more’n you kin a Texas steer. An’ as fer th’ boys — shucks!” And he shook his head in a way that left no uncertainty as to his meaning.

And so it happened that, one bright moonlight night when the air had the intoxication of frost in it and was so clear that it seemed but a step from the Rio Grande to

the snow-capped Sierra Blanca, the young men in high-heeled and tight-fitting boots, and flaming red ties, and well-oiled hair plastered down to their eyebrows, and hands incased in buckskin gloves, together with their young women—rosy-cheeked and buxom, and all blooming in Dolly Vardens and other fantastic feminine creations (though none were designed as they sometimes are in the city, to display charms which it were better to keep hidden)—came up from the Citizens' Ditch; and more men but fewer women came down from the mines in the direction of the Upper Cat.

They were all greeted at the door by Maria's father, who roughly yet warmly extended the hospitality of his house, calling every bashful young fellow by his first name and slapping him on the shoulder, and complimenting the reticent girls in a way that made each his fast friend.

"I swear, it's lucky fer you, Tom, thet I'm married, an' thet my wife's in good health," he would laughingly remark; or, "Malindy, where on earth did you git them fine peaches fer cheeks," a pleasantry that was duly appreciated and acknowledged by blushes that deepened the hues of the "peaches."

The great dining-room floor was sweet and clean, though yet damp from its recent scrubbing, and a huge stove in one corner of the room was almost at a white heat, for the night was a cold one. Whenever the door was opened into the adjoining kitchen there would drift in the appetizing fragrance of boiling coffee and stewing oysters which were to be served later at "six bits per lady and gent," as had been stated in the invitations.

Everybody was in exuberant spirits, and none was dis-

posed to criticize another's shortcomings, if, indeed, dancing were ever placed in that category by most Cat Creek folk. Those who condemned it were either not present or inclined quietly to turn away their heads, and to others it was, of course, a matter of no concern. And so, when Jack and Maria — they were married now — stepped out blushing to lead the first cotillion, they were welcomed by a ripple of applause.

The floor was soon well filled, and the painfully bashful restraint was thrown to the four winds. Old Glassy was at once in his element, and as he bent over his fiddle he loudly called in his peculiar singsong:

“S'lute yer pardners! Let 'er go!
Balance all and do-se-do!
Swing yer girls an' run away!
Right an' left an' gents sashay!
Gents to right an' swing or cheat!
On to next gal, an' repeat!
Balance next an' don't be shy!
Swing yer pard an' swing her high!
Bunch the girls an' circle round!
Whack yer feet until they bound!
Form a basket! Break away!
Swing an' kiss, an' all git gay!
Al'man left, an' balance all!
Lift yer hoofs an' let 'em fall!
Swing yer op'sites! Swing agin!
Kiss the sage-hens ef ye kin!
Back to pardners, do-se-do!
All jine han's, an' off ye go!
Gents salute yer little sweets!
Hitch an' promenade to seats!”

While the dance was going on, Maria's father stood in the front ranks at the doorway and rubbed his hands like a genial Boniface, while his foot marked time and his portly body swayed with the music. He nodded to this one and

smiled on that, and kept up a running fire of such expressions as "Go in, boys! Hump yerselves! Hold me! Be keerful o' the ceilin'!" Evidently it was with some difficulty that he refrained from joining in the festivities, but the reason was generally understood. His good wife had reluctantly yielded to the importunities of the young people of the neighborhood to have the dance there, because in the first place it was accessible from all quarters and contained a suitable room, and, in the next, after the way they had turned out to the revival, it seemed ungenerous not to accommodate them.

But she had resolved that, so far as her husband and herself were concerned, they should set an example that would be at least but mildly reprehensive; and so, respecting her well-known scruples, no one insisted upon her dancing,—though some there were who out of a spirit of mock gallantry hinted at it,—and she together with several of her age and disposition remained in the "settin'-room," where they piously cracked nuts, and ate popcorn and apples, and talked about the prospects for crops in the valley and the latest strike in the mines,—two unfailing sources of conversation.

Presently old Glassy called out, "Choose yer pardners fer a schottishe! Step up lively, gents, an' don't be shy o' the calico! No wall figgers 'lowed here! Ev'ry lady must be s'plied — bar none!"

Then there was a whirling and crushing, and a bumping into one another, and awkward stepping on dresses followed by apologies and the good-natured "No matter." And so, panting and perspiring—some with dizzy heads—they circled and circled, and went forward, and sideways, and backward, and finally to their seats, first stopping at

the big bucket where fresh spring-water was passed out in a tin cup. And then every man in the room put the same question to some expectant, smiling, and fanning woman, "May I have the pleasure of your company for the next dance?" To which she replied with the stereotyped "Certainly."

Of course, that old-time favorite the Virginia Reel brought from their lurking-places the gray-haired men and the bespectacled women who ranged themselves with the younger set in two long rows, just as they did at the "spellin' bee," and then some of the old fellows got gay and flung themselves about in ludicrous ways.

And so it went — chattering, laughing, good-natured and rollicking, their best manners on dress parade at first, and — but why describe the scene? If you have ever been to a country dance your foot is now keeping time and you are living it all over again in memory. And have you any sweeter memory?

When at length the last strains of the foot-stirring music had died away, and the last girl had tied her "nubia" in a way that left but little of her face exposed (how irresistible that little was!), and had been tucked away beneath the great warm buffalo robes, and the last whip had given its resounding crack, causing the broncos to spring to their work, Jack and Maria, on their way home, began to review the events of the evening.

"How did you enjoy it?" she asked.

"Bully!" he answered, that being the most expressive word at his command that he could utter without stuttering.

"So did I," she admitted; "but Jack, I'm worried for fear they'll church us. Ain't you?"

"No," he replied decisively.

"I'm awful 'fraid they will; and I don't know but what they'd ought to. It wasn't Christian for us to do it. Say, what *would* you do, if they called a church meetin'?" she ventured, timidly.

"I'd tell 'em honest thet while I b-b-b'lieved my soul was cun-cun-verted all hunky thet time, thet p-p-probably my *feet* wasn't. But you needn't worry none, I guess, fer I take notice thet the whole new gang was there; an' they won't nobody d-d-dare ter k-k-kick unless they wants to b-b-break up the church, which I reckon no one is set on a-doin'," he urged, reassuringly.

"I feel sort o' wicked about it," she confessed, her conscience still troubling her.

"Well now, honey, you needn't," he protested, adding: "If any body was wicked it's me, fer I told you ter d-d-dance, didn't I? And you promised ter obey when we got spliced, didn't you?"

"Yes, but—"

"D-d-don't say it," he interrupted. "As fer you, you're not wicked. Know what I think? I think you're an *angel*. Thet's right!" And he raised her chin while he implanted a kiss.

"Jack, honey," said she coyly, "you're givin' me taffy. Now, ain't you?" And she laid a hand caressingly on his arm, and, of course, expected him to contradict her, which he did promptly, and added:

"I wouldn't swap you, Maria, fer—fer the best prospect in Conejos county."

She pouted.

"I mean in Colorado! No, worse'n thet,—not fer the hull o' the gold an' silver in all the world!" Then, as if

that were not quite enough, in a moment he added, "and they could throw in all the copper, too!"

And as they drove on in silence Jack's strong right arm stole round Maria's ample waist, and she nestled up closer and felt that in her husband she had a protector against all harm — the church, perhaps, as well as the Devil.

A few days later Maria went to visit her mother, and confided to her the troubled condition her mind had been in, whereupon her mother said:

"Well, Maria, I guess mebbe 't was wrong, but yer pap is thet frisky it's hard to head him off. Now, I'll tell you something, if you'll promise never to breathe a word of it to a soul — not a single soul, remember!"

Maria promised.

"It's this-a-way: After you all hed gone home, yer pap got old Glassy out in the kitchen an' built up a roarin' big fire an' set him to fiddlin'; an' then nothin' 'ud do but the hired man an' girl an' him must have a high jinks, dancin' an' drinkin' cider, till plumb daylight. When they quit yer pap was sweatin' like a prancin' colt bein' broke to drive double! I never see no youngster appear to enjoy hisself no more, considerin' what hard work yer pap makes of it — he's thet fat an' short o' wind!"

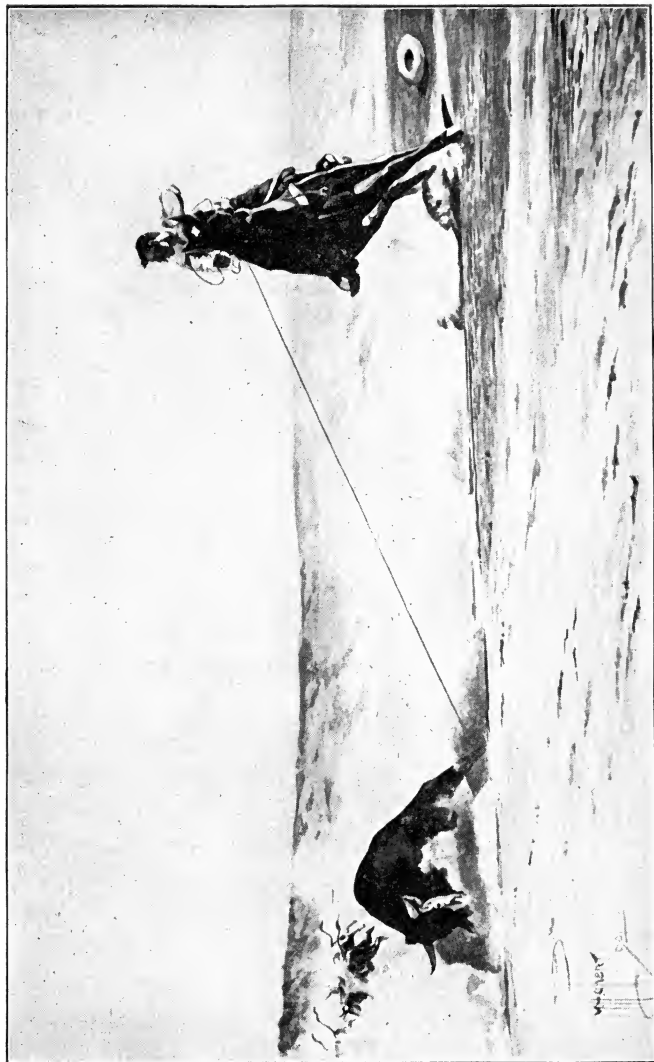
"But three wouldn't make out a set?"

"I was comin' to thet. Pap kep' a-teasin' me till I hed ter yield, but I only took three square dances, an' two schottishes, — an' a couple of waltzes!"

"What! you too, Ma?"

"Me, too, Maria!"

"Well, I do declare!" exclaimed Maria, "I'm dum-flastergated, complete!"



FANCY ROPING,—RIDING A CIRCLE.

In Arizona.

IT was at the Grand Cañon of the Colorado, that incomparable fissure in the earth's surface which has been so often described,—or rather, attempted, for mere words can scarce convey a correct impression of its great size, its sublime grandeur, or its remarkable coloring,—a prodigious chasm into which are projected (seemingly by way of emphasis) many bold and fantastic promontories—towering, terraced, and fluted bastions and embattlements, that yet fall miles short of reaching corresponding ones of the opposite side; a chasm within whose broad confines are many sizable mountains and numerous cañons and gulches—dry, silent, irregular, precipitous, deep—and still beyond and below them a mighty, swift-flowing river looks from the great cañon's rim like a tiny, sinuous, broken thread of silver as it shimmers in the sunlight and winds in and out of a perfect labyrinth of gorges.

Before this marvelously picturesque and stupendous panorama, extending mile upon mile and seen through an atmosphere of great purity, the eye is dazzled, the brain bewildered, the soul enthralled, and the imagination falters at the task of conjuring up the scene when, ages and ages ago, some awful cosmic energy produced this amazing result,—the grandest scenery of its kind in the world.

“Ever hear of Hassayamp Hanks?” asked the smooth-faced and youthful-looking guide whose immobile features were shaded by a white sombrero; and he pried off a big

rock that went bounding from the ledge on which we were standing to another, perhaps a sheer thousand feet, and then crashing through and snapping off the great limbs of pine trees as though they were mere twigs, and thence down again and again, breaking into hundreds of pieces, and at last rattling down through a dark and seemingly narrow crevice, itself several hundred feet in depth, until the dull reverberations that drifted up to us, standing there on the rim, resembled the roar of distant musketry.

"You never?" he continued interrogatively. "Well, say, there was a gorgeous liar for you — rather lie than eat one of Fred Harvey's choice seventy-five-cent meals. Hanks used to handle the ribbons on the stage out from Flag,—a sort of kindergarden for what was to come — but he quituated from that time into a triflin' five-dollar-a-day guide for this here little crack in the bosom of old Mother Earth. After while he lost his teeth an' couldn't tell the truth, an' he got up a great rep. for bein' a trifle the biggest liar in northern Arizony,—an' that hain't no easy job. He was shore one hundred per cent. But say, he made me tired. He wasn't no artist—laid himself wide open too much, an' I reckon if there's anything the Almighty hates like He does pizen it's a *bunglin'* liar. You see, the trouble with Hanks was that he wasn't scientific. *I* am,—back up each an' every statement an' assertion with reliable figures that don't lie."

Here the thrasonical fellow sent another great boulder over the edge of the precipice, his right foot resting on its very edge, and, as the huge stone thundered down through the pine trees and into the smaller cañon, he resumed:

"Hanks was born in Arkansaw, but he come out here before the war an' settled on the Hassayamp, an' there's

a sayin' that anyone who ever drinks of Hassayamp water can never tell the truth again an' will never leave the Territory. Hanks proves it. Now I was born on the Hassayamp myself; I admits that, but I come from up near the head, where you never see no water. She's an Arizony river up there."

"What's that?" asked one of our little party, a man who never lost an opportunity to ask questions. In a jaunty Scotch cap and negligé shirt he didn't look much like a college professor, though he did wear eye-glasses.

"Why the water is always out of sight—runs underground. An' as I was a-goin' on to say, I herded with a different brand from Hanks. I was a cowboy, an' we didn't have much truck with stage-drivin' mavericks them



I X L BOYS.

days. I b'longed to the I X L brand, an' I X L boys was notorious for truth. They called me Truthful Jones, an' they had a way, every man told a lie an' was ketched in it, to clip a letter off his front name, an' that's how I come to

be called Trut,—got fined four times an' lost half my cog. But say, that hain't so bad, is it, considerin' I'm now twenty-two?"

"That is very remarkable and interesting," observed the professor, referring to, and making a mental note of, the definition of an Arizona river, and adding: "How wide is the Cañon here?"

"Eighteen an' seven-eighths mile."

"And how deep?"

"Say, now you're gettin' onto my *speciality*. You may not know it, but the fact is that sound runs so many foot per minute. Well, me an' my pard have it down fine—no extra charge for this. It's like this: He went down to that clump of willers you see away down there—it's called the Indian Gardens, an' she's a full six an' nine-tenths mile if she's an inch, by trail—and he shoots his gun while I stays up here with my silver full-jeweled in my hand. Now, how long do you reckon it was from the time I first seen the smoke of his gun till I heard the plunk? Well, God's truth, it was just exactly six minutes to the dot; no more, no less. Hanks would have told you 't was twelve."

"Six minutes! That would make it over 392,000 feet," replied the professor, making a hasty calculation. "It isn't that deep. Impossible!"

"She's bound to be," insisted Trut.

"Why, man, that's nearly seventy-five miles!" exclaimed the professor, taking another look through his binocle by way of reassuring himself.

"Nearly seventy-five mile she is, then. Science is science," persisted Trut dogmatically.

"You meant six *seconds* instead of minutes, didn't you?" mildly suggested the professor.

"No, sir; six minutes by the watch," replied Trut rather hotly. Then, after a moment's reflection, he asked meekly, "How many foot would six *seconds* give?"

"A little over 6,500," answered the professor, adding: "My measurement makes the rim 6,853 feet above sea-level and the cañon about 5,100 feet in depth."

"Well, I own that that comes nearer bein' what it *seems* to be. My watch must have jumped, or — or —"

Trut noticed the professor's incredulous smile.

"Say, mister," continued Trut, rubbing his chin, "you're too mighty smart for me. I'll 'fess up. Honest Injun, the way I got that was like this: Hanks, him I've been tellin' you about, said it would take twelve minutes, an' the old man always got at his facts by a-multiplyin' the truth by two. The infernal old liar! But it just proves to you what I've said about him is Gospel."

"In this instance he must have used 120 for a multiple," observed the professor.

"Did he? Gosh! I had no idea he was *that* big a liar, though I knowed he was powerful reckless. Well, gents, the cake is his. But just think of it, I've been retailin' that there story for straight goods — told it to an Eastern school-marm on that excursion last summer, an' she did me proud by sayin' that she hadn't met up with no such a reliable an' strictly honest guide as me since she'd left Niagary Falls. Say, these school teachers is dead easy. You're a Judge, I take it?" and Trut looked hard at the professor, who made some evasive answer.

Trut here lapsed into silence, and seemed to be revolving some weighty problem. Presently he said:

"Stranger, you folks from the States oughtn't to be too gol-darned hard on us fellers who have to deal with a proposition like this here," and he waved his hand in the direction of the great cañon, and continued: "It's a hard job, this bein' a guide. If you don't paint up things a heap, folks have no use for you, an' if you do shade 'em up, they get down on you; so, there you are! Of course, gen'rally speakin', I'm strictly honest an' stick close to facts,—unless, as a matter of course, I run across some chump that I think won't know the difference." And he glanced at the professor.

"The situation here doesn't need exaggeration," the professor protested, feeling called upon to say something.

"That's right. Hanks ought to've knowed better. But say, he tried his level best to please, an' every guide, I reckon, ought to be willin' to do *that* much, hadn't he? *What*, young feller?"

This appeal was directed to the divinity student in the party, but it received no answer.

That evening as we sat before some blazing logs in the log cabin and listened to the facile Trut's thrilling tales of adventure (many of them related to mishaps of travelers who had attempted to exploit the canoñ without the services of a guide), some one asked him what had become of Hanks, of whom we had heard so much, to which he replied:

"Oh, he's a-runnin' an opposition propersition up the river; but there's nothin' to see up there—not a thing on earth—an' there's no water fit to drink, an' the trail is that bad a burro won't set foot in it, an' he charges

three prices an' then don't give you nothin'. I'll buy him an' sell him some day. Watch *me*." He was very vindictive, but soon added in a confidential tone: "There's a bit of calico up there that I call mine, but she don't take after her daddy. She's more like her mother; don't lie — so much!"

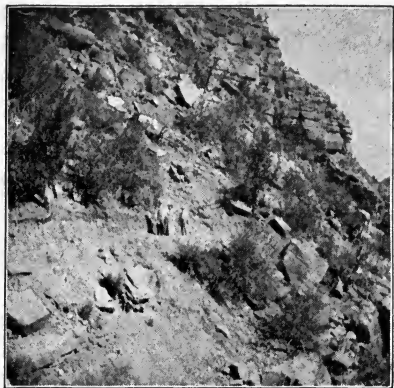
The comparison was doubtless intended more as a compliment to the mother than as a representation of the moral qualities of the "bit of calico." The divinity student shaded his eyes.

"Tell us about her? She's pretty and accomplished, of course?" we bantered.

"Pretty? Mister, did you ever see a Verde Valley peach? It's not in it with her cheeks — not for a minute. Accomplished? Man alive! you just ought to see her ride a bronco — that's what give her her name, 'Bronco Kitty.' There's no buckin' beast that can toss her over his head; she was born an' raised on one; she'd ought to know the hoss alphabet from A to Izzard, an' she does, too, an' likewise how to handle a gun." And an expression of much admiration came into his face as he went on with his description.

"You should like her father for her sake," observed the professor kindly.

"Well, *he* don't like *me* none for her sake, not 'cause I hain't smart enough an' rich enough,—for I am: been to the Rule of Three in 'rithmetic, an' have over two hundred plunks salted down in the Arizony Central down at Williams,—but 'cause he don't want no man that walks an' wears pants to have her. You see, she's his *only*; she's been both boy an' girl to him, an' she's his mainstay. He says he couldn't go on without her to jolly him over the



"DOWN AT WILLIAMS."

trail, an' she's that darned tender-like 'bout him that I can't get her to leave his ranch for no life of protracted bliss down here. You see, she's true to us both—no one else can herd on *that* range. Now what would *you* do, if you was me?" And Trut turned to the professor, who, by the way, was a bachelor of forty.

"Do you love her very much?" asked the professor evasively.

"'Very much'? I should smile that I do. My heart itches for her like a dog with a tick in his ear," he replied with emphasis.

"You are young, and can afford to wait for a girl such as she. Didn't Jacob wait seven years for Rachel?" put in the divinity student, who thus far had remained discreetly silent.

"Mebbe he did; but I'm not Jacob, an' Kitty hain't Rachel—not by a d—d sight! Reckon, though, I'll have to peg along single for awhile, unless—unless—I takes a notion to go up to the Hanks place to inhabit, which I *may* even if water is scarce up there. Say, if I did, wouldn't that be *salt* for Hanks? *What?*"

No one expressed an opinion on the "salt" question, and

Trut, feeling that he had been rather too severe on his future father-in-law, said:

"Say, the old man Hanks has his failin's, but a man who tells half the truth can't be all wrong, an' he's all hunky when it comes to Kitty. If he doubled an' trebled on her he couldn't more than tell a patchin' of the truth, for God never made nothin' better an' put it into petticoats. That's right!"

There was a short period of silence.

"Say," resumed Trut, looking at the divinity student, "it hain't wrong, is it, to stretch the truth a trifle on the girl you like? What?"

"Honesty is the best policy," timidly remarked the student.

"That's what Shakespeare used to say, but I guess he never lived in Arizony where cold facts don't seem to do things. For instance, if you'd say 'It's hot in Yuma,' what would that mean to a chap who'd never been there? Nothin'. An' even when you say it's hotter than hell there he only gets a glimmer of what it's like. But, speakin' of Kitty, I'll tell you what's what, she lassoed me the first time I laid eyes on her. That's no joke."

And, as Trut leaned forward and knocked the ashes from his pipe and the flicker of the fire illumined his face, it was apparent to all that Bronco Kitty had "lassoed" at least one young man most effectually.

"Well, gents, here's to Kitty, the queen of Coconino county!" And Trut tipped a large bottle to his lips and passed it on to the divinity student.

"I—I—really I—" blushed the student.

"You're not a-goin' to pass?" said Trut coldly.

"I—I never drink intox—intoxicating—" stammered the student awkwardly.

"You mean," interrupted Trut, "that you never *have*, but I puts it to you now polite an' in the present tense, an' there's a lady in the case, recollect. No gent ever refuses to drink to the fair sex in Arizony!"

"I should very much prefer not to — not to —"

"What! Prefer not to drink to Kitty's health? Do you mean that?" And Trut's right hand went back to his hip pocket.

"My dear brother —"

"Don't *brother* me! You're no Gospel sharp, I reckon," cried Trut indignantly.

"I mean — er — I mean," faltered the student, reaching out a hand for the bottle, "that under ordinary circumstances I —" And then there was a satisfactory gurgle of the bottle.

"Now, Spectacles, your turn," said Trut, handing the bottle to the professor, who waved his hand and shook his head with unavailing good-nature.

"To Bronco Kitty, the queen of Coconino. What? You won't? Last call, old man! Come, wet up lively!" said Trut impatiently.

"If — er — you'll permit me," said the professor nervously, "I'll not drink to *Bronco Kitty* —"

"What!" cried Trut.

"— because my high regard for womanhood makes the use of the appellation 'Bronco' distasteful to me. I was about to say, when you interrupted me, that if you will allow me, I'll change the toast to this: Here's to Miss Kate Hanks, her father's darling and her lover's idol!" And with a graceful sweep of the hand the professor gal-

lantly put the bottle to his lips, and then passed it on to others, who needed less urging.

“Bully for you, old boy! Say, there’s no flies on you, old Spectacles. I thought from the cut of your mug you was our kind of people,” said Trut, slapping the professor on the shoulder in the exuberance of good-fellowship, and then finishing the bottle, remarking as he did so, “There hain’t no shore sign of a gent till you see him take a drink. You’ll excuse me, but the way you two fellers drink to a lady’s health takes the bakery over anything I ever seen; don’t b’lieve you took a finger betwixt you — but you drunk to her health just the same. Well, gents, can’t we get up a little game of draw, now?” And he pulled out a deck of cards and deftly shuffled them.

But the hour was too late for the professor and the divinity student to think of such a thing, and they were permitted to withdraw to their room, and when they were safely there the professor said:

“It is sometimes the part of prudence to waive one’s conscientious scruples. I think we acted very wisely. Don’t you think so?”

“Yes, I quite agree with you — quite. Of course, under ordinary circumstances one should stand like a wall of adamant in support of his principles, but I very much doubt, professor, the propriety of one’s becoming a martyr when he is satisfied that Providence has other work for him to do. Take the case of a *young* man, for instance, whose life’s work is before him. There is such a thing as expediency. You saw the fellow reach for his gun before I yielded, didn’t you?”

“Certainly. I tell you we may feel thankful, for I’ve often read how cheap these Western cowboys hold human

life. How cool and unconcerned he was when he rested his hand on his hip! Another instant's delay on your part and you would have been ——”

“Excuse *me*, gents,” interrupted Trut, sticking his head in at the door, “but I thought mebbe you’d not mind makin’ me the loan of a gun till mornin’. I hain’t got none, an’ I might see somethin’ to shoot when I go down



THE CAYUSES.

the trail at daybreak for the cayuses; besides, you don’t seem to have no ‘use for so many. Thanks! One’ll do. Reckon I’ve almost forgot how to use a gun. *I hain’t wore one for years!*”

After Trut had gone, the professor looked blankly at the divinity student, and the divinity student looked blankly at the professor. Presently the professor said:

“Do you suppose the fellow told the truth then?”

“I can hardly believe,” answered the student, “that a cowboy ever goes unarmed, and yet, come to think of it, I believe he afterward pulled the deck of cards out of his right hip pocket.”

“So he did,” assented the professor.

“Perhaps it would be just as well if—if we were to

keep this little experience to ourselves. You know it might be embarrassing for you to try to explain to your classes just why you yielded to ——”

“How about yourself? Don’t you think it might be somewhat difficult for you to convince a congregation that a person of your cloth should ever under any circumstances drink whisky?” retorted the professor.

“But I was under duress,” urged the student.

“Were you really?” taunted the professor.

“How could I know that it was a pack of cards instead of a pistol that he had in his pocket?” argued the young man.

“I don’t know, but you don’t need to argue the point with me. I own that I was scared, and I feel sure that you were too, judging by the way your hand trembled when you took the bottle, and I am willing to testify to it should you ever need a witness.”

The two men then rolled themselves up in their blankets and went to sleep, perchance to dream of life in Arizona.

Soda Springs Smith.

[Belford's Magazine.]

IN Colorado, as perhaps in other mountainous regions, they have a way — not so common now as formerly — of giving a person a sobriquet which shall distinctly point out the distinguishing characteristics or the calling of the individual. Every old-timer who has risen above the dead-level of mediocrity has a handle to his name. So, too, have many who have fallen below that level. Thus it was that a plain, simple and red-headed Smith of Missouri, who came for his health, and so, found every pleasant day sitting for hours at a time near the soda springs, alternately drinking their waters and resting his emaciated and elongated body, came to be called "Soda Springs Smith." In time, even the family dropped the old Missouri appellation of "Sandy," and adopted the new "Soda." True, it was not much of a change. Perhaps that is why he was never heard to object. But then, this particular Smith was good-natured and mild-mannered — I prefer these adjectives to others synonymous with laziness — so that he would not have seriously objected, I think, to being dubbed most anything which the fanciful imagination might suggest as appropriate. He used to playfully say to his companions: "Call me anything jest so you don't call me too airy o' a mornin' nor too late ter meals."

This was some of his genuine, imported, native Missouri wit, which he came by honestly; for it was an heir-loom.

Well, when Soda arrived at Manitou in the early '70's,

he pitched his tent in the shade of the willows up Williams's Cañon, because it was conveniently near the mineral springs and the Fontaine qui Bouille. Soda was not much of a French scholar, hence he never attempted to pronounce the full name of the boiling little stream. He called it "Founting," just as he was particular to say "mounting," instead of mountain. Soda always put on an "ing" where he ought not, and as persistently left it off where common usage required that it should be left on. However, he made no pretensions to "book larnin'." Once, when asked if he was a grammarian, he indignantly replied, "No, sah, I'm a Missourian."

Soda's family at that time consisted of a wife, whom he spoke of as the "ole woman" (though she was not yet



YOUNG JONES HELPED HIS COUSIN.

thirty), or "her." Then there was a little girl, sallow, blue-eyed and freckled, who answered to "Milda." They all came out to Colorado in a covered wagon drawn by oxen; and "Tige," the yellow "cur of low degree," lived on the

axle-grease all the way from Pike county to El Paso. In the party was Mrs. Smith's cousin, Reuben Jones, a young man of twenty-five years. Most anyone would say he was a handsomer, as he certainly was a younger, man than Smith. Young Jones helped his cousin with the labors of the camp, while Smith was trying to reduce his "ager cake," by drinking the soda springs waters. I learned these details afterwards.

I had often met Soda at the springs pavilion, but his disconsolate, discouraged look repelled familiarity, and so, though I frequently sat on the opposite bench, I never felt quite like obtruding myself upon his attention. I had, however, a curiosity to know this strange man's history, for I thought I could see that he had drunk the very dregs of the cup of sorrow.

I waited. One day the opportunity came. Soda was out of tobacco. He approached obsequiously:

"Stranger," said he, "hev yer any o' th' weed 'bout yer pusson?"

I produced a plug of navy.

"Whar, mought I ask, does yer claim ter be frum ter these parts?"

"Chicago," I returned civilly.

"Chicago! Wal, do tell! Did yer ever meet up with Cadwallader Johnson? Cad. went thar ter work on a rel-road seven year ago, mebbe eight, this comin' spring. Him must 'a' bin twenty-one, an' 'bout my size, an' jest a leetle crossed."

I was compelled to admit I had never made the young man's acquaintance, though I stated that I might have met him on the street and would not now recall him, since his eyes might have been so slightly crossed as to not attract

particular attention; or, they might have been operated on before I saw him.

"Thet's strange," observed Soda, "fer Cad. wuz an on-common good mixer, an' was never back'ard in goin' for'ard ez I wuz. Then yer'd a know'd him frum his eyes ef yer ever caught him squar'. Don't think he'd ever doctor 'em, 'kase him sorter liked 'em that-a-way."

Again I waited for him. The way to get intimate with a real native Missourian is to let him do most of the talking.

"I 'low yer'll excuse *me*, but I makes it a pint ter ax ev'ry pusson thet I see a-ailin' thar jedgment on these heah waters."

"Well," I said, "In my opinion, they are unexcelled."

"Sum says one thing, sum 'nother; sum sez they is good fer one 'fliction, then again t'other sez they isn't. It don't stand ter reason thet th' same stuff will cure rheumatics which is in th' bones, an' ager-cake which is in th' stum-mick. Yer know too much sal'ratus or soda will spile the best o' biskits. My own notion is thet too much o' this heah soda-water will rot yer, jest ez too much rain will rot yer boots. 'Pears like water o' any kind makes me sort o' slack-twisted."

"Why don't you change to the Iron Springs water?" I modestly inquired.

"Lor' me, frien', I'se swilled iron-water enough, I reck'n ef et war all in a lump ter make a cook-stove, an' I kep' on till my blood got so rusty thet th' skeeters wouldn't suck et. 'Tain't no use talkin'; et may be good fer sum folks, but I'd rather hev my in'ards et up by soda than rusted out with wet iron. Guess mebbe I'se been a-drinkin' these heah waters already too long, fer I'se got

so I kaint work no moah. I 'se jest like th' soda-water — pretty much all fizz an' no bottom, an' powerful weak."

"That 's too bad, for I suppose there is plenty of work to be had here," I said.

"Not so pow'ful much, my frien', not so pow'ful much; but thar would be ef ev'ry man wuz ez gen'rus an' public-speerited ez Col'nel J. B. Wheeler, an' Jedge Archie Williams, an' sich. Them fellers knows how ter make money an' likewise how ter spen' et. I allus 'low thet thar 's a right smart in knowin' how to spen' ez in knowin' how ter make. I loves a good open-fisted spen'er."

"Have you done well in coming here?" I asked, trying to show a friendly interest in the poor fellow's welfare.

"I made money han' over fist in th' airly days. 'Twasn't no trouble ter make money them days. 'Twas five dollars fer going ter th' Springs fer a load. Wal, then I met up with sum bad luck; I lost my team, frien'; yes, I lost my team, an' sence then, I hev'n't met luck on th' road onst, while afore thet, I wuz a-meetin' her at every turn in th' road, an' she was a-principally comin' down hill. Then th' relroads begin comin', an' they jest *killed teamin' ded*. So I thought 'twur'n't wuth while ter buy 'nother team; sence then I 'se hired out now an' then drivin' 'spress."

I think Soda wanted to change the subject of conversation.

"My frien'," said Soda, "I reck'n I 'll hev ter bother yer fer 'nother chaw o' thet terbaccy. Thanks! I kinder cottoned ter yer frum th' fust. I know'd yer wuz my kind o' people — don't hev much ter say, but keeps up a pow'ful sight o' thinkin', eh?"

"Yes," I answered, "I was always rāther reserved."

"Excuse me, frien', but what wuz yer name thar?" he inquired.

I felt that there was a suspicion in Soda's mind that I had changed my name since coming to Colorado, on account of some crime committed before leaving home; but I answered civilly.

"Reck'n yer hevn't been heah long 'nuf ter git a new one. I got one mighty soon, though," and then he proceeded to tell me all about it.

"Her an' Milda got ter callin' me 'Soda,' an' her used ter say ez how her couldn't keep house without 'soda.' The poor fellow smiled at the feeble wit.

"Her wuz alluz a right peert woman," he added, and drew a long sigh.

I felt that something dreadful had happened. I would approach the subject delicately; but how?

"Yer ever see one o' these heah mounting clouds bust?" queried Soda.

I answered in the negative.

"Wal, I hopes yer never will, nuther. I wuz *in* one wunst."

There was another period of silence.

"It wuz this-a-way. I wuz sittin' heah one summer ar-ternoon, jest like we 'uns air doin' now. I hed left th' camp 'bout ten o'clock. All ter onst, thar wuz a cloud no bigger 'n yer hand hangin' over th' canyun. Th' fust thing I knowed, th' water cum a-tumblin' an' a-rollin' like mad. I jest cuts loose fer camp, but lawzee, mister, yer couldn't no more git up thar then yer could fly ter Denver. I fotched up on a big boulder an' sot thar an' waited. Jest then th' old Jackson wagin cum floatin' by in pieces, an' then th' tent-poles, tent an' oxen, then ole 'Tige' chained

ter th' pole. My frien', I reck'n yer never see sich distruction sence th' days o' Noah."

Here, Soda shifted his attenuated frame. I saw that the narrative visibly affected him, and I trembled for its climax. He seemed in deep thought and reluctant to proceed.

"Your poor wife and child, did they, too, go down?" I ventured.

Soda leaned over me as if for sympathy and in a low tone said:

"My frien', betwixt me an' you, the ole woman done tuck up thet mornin' with thet triflin' white trash, Rube Jones, 'bout two hours afore thet spout cum, so her wuz saved. Her lives up thar now, on his ranch in th' Park. 'Taint thet so much; but say, yer don't know, my frien', how et do break a poor man all up ter lose his *only ox-team*."

"Your little girl? Tell me about her," I queried tentatively.

Soda's pinched face grew paler, and his voice lowered to a muffled and husky whisper as he proceeded slowly:

"Her war saved, too, but po' leetle Milda! 'Pears ez ef I kin see her leetle weezened face and sorrerful eyes now. Wal, frien', hear me: 'peared like her couldn't stan' et no longer, th' bad way her ma treated her pa, an' so, arter awhile, her kinder pined, understan' me, an' kep' on a-pinin' till her lost her grip entirely. Po' leetle one, her went gentle like,—jest es th' sun drops down th' mounting an' lets go o' day. Say, my frien', loosin' th' ole ox-team wuz es nawthin' ter thet,—no, nawthin'!"

The poor fellow sighed and felt at his throat as if to press down the lump that made it so difficult to articulate. Then, rising and leaning on his old hickory staff, he added pathetically:

"I reck'n et's time I wuz goin' up ter water th' flowers. Mebbe yer mought likes ter go 'long up? 'Taint fur,—jest under th' clump o' trees at th' head o' th' gulch. Say, my frien', et 'pears ter me up thar I kin hear th' rustle o' angels' wings; an' mebbe, ef yer heart's atune, ye'll hear 'em likewise, when we gits ter th' po' leetle kid's grave, thar under th' quakin' asps."

Soda leaned heavily on my arm, and we stopped frequently to rest. I never had noticed before how transparent his bloodless hands were. His cough, too, was more violent in its paroxysms, and it seemed very difficult for him to breathe.

"A trifle slower, frien', jest a leetle slower. Some mought think ter see me thet I hed consumption. 'Taint thet et all. It's rheumatiz an' bronchitees. Could get 'long with th' cough all O. K, ef et wuz not fer th' rheumatiz touchin' my heart 'casionally. We air mos' thar."

We toiled on slowly up the gulch. Soda looked so tired and exhausted. He leaned more heavily on me. As we turned a sharp point of rocks, I saw a woman sitting on a mound beneath the shade of a few aspen trees,—a sun-bonnet hid her face.

My companion reeled a little, and his limbs became limp. I almost dragged him to a log by the roadside. As I rested his head on my knee, I saw his gaze fixed on the woman under the trees. He tried to speak. I put my ear close to his mouth, and caught only two words, "*Milda's ma.*"

Then the woman hurriedly ran toward us, threw herself at my feet and grasped the thin hand of the lifeless body and covered it with kisses, sobbing: "Sandy, honey, what

did yer do it fer? Didn't yer know thet yer old woman hed come back ter yer, Sandy?"

And as I turned to go, I heard the low, gentle rustle of the aspen leaves.

Governor for Five Minutes.

SHERIFF ROUGHNER was *en route* from one of the western counties of Kansas to Topeka, having in custody a cowboy who had been duly adjudged *non compos mentis*. As the train was nearing their destination, the sheriff was engaged in conversation by a portly man, the cut of whose whiskers betokened an English nativity. Though the man did not at the time introduce himself, it was afterward learned that he was none other than Professor Hardrock, a professional hypnotist, then on his way to the capital of Kansas, where he was booked to give an exhibition of his powers.

The conversation between the sheriff and the professor soon drifted round to the latter's favorite subject, and the sheriff, who prided himself on his ability to resist any exertion which had for its object the subjection of his will to that of another, boldly asserted that he "would like to see the chap who could hypnotize" him.

"Why, I believe I could do it," said the professor.

"You?" contemptuously queried the sheriff.

"Yes, sir," modestly answered the professor.

"Well, if you think you can, you can just crack away and welcome," said the sheriff rather defiantly.

"But who would take care of your prisoner here?" asked the professor.

"Oh, I'll take care of him just the same," replied the sheriff.

"By the way, what is his name?" the professor asked carelessly.

"Jackson," returned the sheriff.

"Why, no it isn't. Jackson is your name, sir. J-a-c-k-s-o-n," the professor suggested, spelling the name slowly.

"I say that's the crazy man's name," replied the sheriff hotly. "You see you can't do it," he added triumphantly.

"Why, Jackson, how are you? Taking you to the asylum, eh?" persisted the professor, and extending his open hand to the sheriff, which the latter took in a hesitating way.

"Jackson, old boy, I'm right glad to see you. This is the sheriff with you, is it? Taking you to the asylum, eh? Well, I'll just attend to him. The fact is you two fellows got mixed up in coming down to the train last night. Now change places with him," the professor ran on, keeping his gaze fixed upon the sheriff, and indicating by the movement of his hands a change of seats with the insane man, while the erstwhile self-confident sheriff was doing with surprising alacrity the things he was told to do.

"Of course," the professor went on, "it would hardly be fair, after making such a blunder, for you not to promptly acknowledge it, and turn over to this gentleman here the warrant you have in your pocket for his commitment. Would it?"

"Why, of course not. Excuse me, Mr. Sheriff, here, take it," said the sheriff, at the same time handing the bewildered Jackson the warrant.

Apparently the professor now had two lunatics on his hands, a novel experience, and, it must be confessed, not

exactly a pleasant one unless he could promptly undo his work before the real one should discover the true situation, — a thing he was liable to do, for he was not so entirely bereft as not to appreciate the fact that he was restrained of his liberty.

Presently the professor tried to restore the sheriff, but so thoroughly had he become possessed of the notion that he was incurably insane, that Hardrock's art seemed for a time to fail him, and the sheriff laughed most scornfully, and leered at him whenever he tried to make him believe that he was not insane, but in fact an officer of the law. The positive side of Roughner's nature seemed to have asserted itself with a vengeance, and the professor seemed to be sorely perplexed.

By this time a number of passengers had gathered about the men, and the perspiration stood out in great beads upon the stout professor's broad forehead. Some one in the car started the story that all three of the men — the sheriff, the professor, and the man in custody — were insane, and of course one of them had a loaded gun, and danger was imminent.

The conductor and brakeman were hastily sent for, but before they came the professor had happily hit upon the expedient of hypnotizing the crazy cowboy and making him believe that he was sheriff, and soon Roughner handed his revolver over to him upon request. Things were in this shape when the conductor appeared upon the scene and demanded "Tickets!"

The apparent sheriff felt in his pocket, but could find no evidence of a right to ride, and so he pointed to the man opposite, at the same time giving the conductor a wink, as

much as to say, "He has the transportation; he may deny it, but don't take *no* for an answer." Thereupon the conductor shook the passenger pointed at, and said "Tickets, please!"

"Go away and mind your business!" shouted Roughner, rising threateningly in his seat.

"You'll either pay your fare or get off," said the conductor very firmly. He had but recently taken charge of the train, and had not collected fares in that car, and so did not know what the trouble was. The passenger did not move, but defiantly stood his ground.

Meanwhile, the professor was trying to explain, but the conductor thought he was crazy, and told him to keep his mouth shut and mind his own business; and so, very soon the obstreperous passenger was collared and rapidly pushed toward the front door, the professor tugging at the conductor's coat-tails and vainly trying to say something. The bell-cord had been pulled, and the train had stopped. Meantime the real crazy man, revolver in hand, had rushed to the other end of the car, jumped to the ground, and reached the front end of the car just in time to confront the trainman and the sheriff, and to command them to stay on the train. Then he ordered the engineer to "pull out." This exhibition of threatened violence so overawed the crowd on the platform that it gave the professor, at last, a chance to be heard.

"Governor!" shouted the professor, pointing his finger at the conductor, at which remark everybody, save the man on the ground with the gun, laughed.

"Governor!" again shouted the professor, still pointing his index finger directly at the conductor, who now was plainly succumbing to his fate.

"Governor, I'm glad to see you; your arrival is most opportune, sir. You are needed to suppress this disturbance," suggested the professor.

"Have I been officially notified that the local authorities are insufficient? I must proceed constitutionally, sir," said the conductor, hesitatingly.

"You have been officially notified, your excellency. You have full power," replied the professor in an assuring tone.

Thereupon the late conductor placed his right hand over his heart and assumed an attitude of great dignity. Then, turning to the crazy cowboy who was carelessly toying with the revolver, he said very deliberately and impressively:

"Fellow-citizens, I represent the majesty of the law. Under my reign everybody is equal before the law. I ride on passes, why should not you? If you are my equal, as I declare that you are, you should put down your gun, and get on board, and ride with me *free!*"

But the crazy cowboy acted as though he had heard such speeches before, and he made no move. He seemed to be enjoying his freedom, and proceeded to cock the revolver. Here was a desperate situation! Suppose that he should take it into his head to shoot the professor, what would then become of the poor sheriff, and what would become of the conductor? There would be no one to restore them. Would the one be doomed to a life in an asylum, and the other be forever exercising the duties of an imaginary office without salary? Heavens!

Fortunately, the professor was equal to the emergency. At the snap of his finger, the cowboy clambered on board, the sheriff ambled back to his seat, and was followed by the "Governor," two brakemen, and the professor. Then the

conductor again asked the sheriff for his fare, just as though nothing had happened, and the latter handed up an annual for himself and a ticket for his companion, and a farmer in the seat behind, who had been an interested spectator, said, "Well, I'll be dod-burned, that do beat anything I ever seen!"

Train No. 4 reached Topeka five minutes late that day, and the conductor going in to register, could give no satisfactory reason for it; but the professor, stepping up, said,

"Put down 'Delay acct. of advertising.'"

"What do you mean?" demanded the train dispatcher.

"I mean that I show here to-night. I'm Hardrock, the hypnotist. Here are a couple of complimentaries."

Some of the railroad men jokingly asked the conductor how it seemed to be governor for five minutes, to which he replied:

"Oh, it was just like runnin' down grade with the steam shut off, and no orders to look out for nothin'!"

NOTE.—Were the foregoing story a true one, the moral would be obvious, for it would show how dangerous, and even subversive of all government, it would be to permit the exercise of hypnotism. But the timid need have no fear, for it is not true. In some courts hypnotism has been set up as a defense to the charge of felonious homicide, but thus far it has proved unavailing, and, though strange things happen in Western politics, it is believed that there is at present little danger, should anyone adopt the suggestion of the story, of changing an administration by this sort of proxy, however desirable it might be at times.—THE AUTHOR.

Pike's Peak by Moonlight.

[Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly.]

ABOVE timber-line, above vegetation of any kind, and above the clouds, the daring enterprise and skill of the civil engineer and the business sagacity of the restless American capitalist have pushed the iron horse onward and upward to the very summit of that grand old monarch of the Rocky Mountains, Pike's Peak. Other railroads may have attained greater elevations, but they have not done so in the short length of the Manitou & Pike's Peak.

There are a number of higher mountains in the United States. Indeed, there are twenty-three slightly higher ones named, in Colorado alone. There are more typical mountain-peaks — peaks that stand out in bolder relief. Such as Mount Ranier, in Washington; Mount Hood, in Oregon; and Mount Shasta, in California, which, seen as they are from near the sea-level, are indisputably more conspicuous. Still, Pike's Peak is wonderfully grand and awe-inspiring. Then, too, its historic associations are such as to excite one's curiosity.

It was first sighted by Lieutenant Zebulon Montgomery Pike, after whom it was named, in the fall of 1806. He wrote: "No human being could ascend to that summit." How little did he dream that within the same century human beings would make that ascent without effort!

The gold excitement of 1859 put the name "Pike's Peak" on everyone's lips. The Supreme Court of Kansas

has decided that Pike's Peak was, in those days, within the limits of the Territory of Kansas. Then the "Pike's Peak region" was the Mecca of fond hopes, the alluring acme of avaricious ambition, and the fatal snare of disappointment and despair. "Pike's Peak or bust!" inscribed on many an outgoing white-canvassed "prairie schooner," and the familiar "Busted, by thunder!" on the returning journey, told the tale most epigrammatically. Tourists at Manitou now smile when they see a four-horse team drive up in front of the hotel, disclosing on the rear of the carriage, in flaming red and gilt letters, the old-time motto. It is humorous now; it was pathetic a third of a century ago. Later, in the early 70's, the smoke of the approaching locomotives on the distant plains to the eastward might be seen. From the top of the old peak they must have seemed, even with the aid of the most powerful lens, in an air itself wonderfully transparent, like Lilliputian skippers in a Brobdignaggian expanse of blue.

Soon thousands of people were daily gazing from car-windows at the fair and shining summit. Wherever they might go, from Denver to Pueblo, they raised their eyes to see the mute sentinel to the mid-continent fastnesses, and were not disappointed. It seemed to follow them. Then adventurous tourists began to tell their Eastern friends of scaling on foot its heights, and of the glorious sunrise view that rewarded their intrepid daring. Later, in 1889, a carriage road was built from Cascade, and then the journey to its top and the return were made from Manitou between breakfast and supper. Another year, and the round trip could be accomplished by rail in a little over four hours.

To describe this wonderful railroad and the scenery, which at every turn of its nine miles is kaleidoscopically revealed to the eye of the tourist as he sits in the luxurious car and gazes in rapt amazement out of the broad windows, one wishes to rely more upon the aid of a camera than upon his descriptive powers, however Talmagean his vocabulary or imagination. The railroad was completed October 20th, 1890, but not regularly opened for travel till June, 1891. It is without counterpart on the Western Hemisphere. In point of elevation overcome and maximum of elevation attained it is the most remarkable in the world. It is similar, however, in essential respects to the cog-wheel road at Mount Washington.

It is standard gauge, with wide and substantial road-bed and heavy steel rails, the traction devolving upon two heavy serrated rails in the center, upon which operate six cog-wheels underneath the locomotive. It is built upon the Abt system (in use in Switzerland), and the peculiar mechanical construction of both track and locomotive, it is claimed, renders it absolutely safe. The length of the track is 46,992 feet, in which there is a total ascent of 7,525 feet, or an average of 844.8 feet to the mile, making an average grade of sixteen per cent. The steepest grades are a rise of one foot in four. The bridges, of which there are only four, are entirely of iron and masonry. The track in the steepest places is firmly anchored every two hundred feet. There are no trestles. The locomotives are without tenders, unique in appearance, and weigh twenty-eight tons each when loaded. They push the cars on the ascent and precede them on the descent. The coaches are largely of glass, to

facilitate observation, with seats so arranged that most of the time passengers have a level sitting.

The road is open for only about three or four months in the year, hence those engaged in the operating department have nice, long vacations. During the busy season several trains are run daily, with additional excursions when the moon is full. Taking the train at five o'clock P. M. at the picturesque little depot just above the Iron Springs, at an elevation of 6,622 feet—an elevation greater than the top of Mount Washington—the locomotive whistled (it has no bell), and we were off for our skyland destination. It is up-grade from the very start to the finish, and the engine puffs laboriously, as if the rarefied air affected its breathing.

We are at once in Engleman's Cañon, which is followed for nearly three miles along the dashing and foaming waters of Ruxton creek, at times near its level, again hundreds of feet above. About one mile from the depot we pass two great rocky points, crested each with a huge boulder, known as Gog and Magog, which we have been looking up at, but which we are soon to look down upon. It is not infrequent now to see towering above our path in a threatening way a boulder covering an area nearly as large as an ordinary city lot. The "Grand Pass" for 2,000 feet is one of the longest and steepest inclines; then we pass "Hanging Rock" on the right, and then, in quick succession, "Artist's Glen" and "Sheltered Falls," and arrive at "Minnehaha Falls," where the enterprising "town boomer" has staked off a site. The train has made a few stops, and the passengers have gathered armfuls of beautiful wild roses, verbenas, columbines, marigolds, blue-

bells, larkspurs, asters, sunflowers, pink gillias, purple pentstemons, the cream-colored soap-weed, and many kinds of flowers not now called to mind.

Flowers grow in profusion at still greater heights. One wonders how they ever found their way there, and how such delicate things, as we are accustomed to regard them, can withstand such cold. They form their splendid procession on the plains in early spring, moving to the foothills, and then up the mountain-sides as the season advances and the snow melts; the same varieties blooming weeks later in the mountains than on the plains. Thus, the character of vegetation is constantly changing with every few hundreds of feet of elevation.

We now pass the "Devil's Slide" with its lofty "Pinnacle Rocks," and see far above, to the right, a rustic pavilion with a shred of the Stars and Stripes floating from its staff. In what bold relief it stands out in the clear blue sky! The views of the peak, and Manitou, and surrounding country, from this "Grand View Rock," are indeed grand. It is reached by trail from the "Halfway House," a cozy little retreat among the pines.

Thus far we have had the music of the rollicking Ruxton creek all the way; while chipmunks have scurried from rock to rock, crying out at times as if resenting our intrusion.

Again we start on the upward journey, and passing through a narrow defile known as "Hell Gate," are in Ruxton Park, a comparatively level valley covered with green grass, pine and aspen groves. The round smooth head of "Bald Mountain" is now seen in the distance. In passing "Lion's Gulch" we get our first grand view of

Pike's Peak. How far have we already climbed, and yet there it is, still towering above us!

Now we part company with the trees, which have been growing smaller and gnarled and twisted, for we are 11,625 feet up — "timber-line." A sharp turn, and the train has passed "Windy Point" and is climbing into the "Saddle." Whoever christened these various places had an eye for the proprieties, as well as a seeming regard for "hell" and the "devil." Then for a mile and a half there is nothing but broken rocks and drifted snow in patches.

At last we are at the abandoned old Government signal station, now used as a hotel, 14,147 feet above the sea — Pike's Peak. A blazing fire in a large stove is found, though it is midsummer. Some shiver about the stove, others in winter wraps walk over the seventy-acre mass of broken, irregular-shaped and sharp-cornered rocks, and gaze and gaze. Some of our party bled at the nose, and a few experienced difficulty in breathing, caused by the rarity of the atmosphere.

All of our party, save the "colonel" from Texas, had a feeling of personal inconsequence, and were wrapt in silent contemplation of the sublimity and awfulness of nature's grandeur. How petty poor frail humanity seemed! He is indeed conceited who does not feel his individual insignificance as he looks down over the outspread world, beholding a city at his feet, looking like a mere checkerboard — the plaything of a child. Beyond are the billowy plains,

"Bathed in the tenderest purple of distance,
Tinted and shadowed by pencils of air,"

while below and all around are mountain ranges and peaks, some snow-capped and pretentious, yet all kneeling and

acknowledging the supremacy of their grand old monarch. Some one has well said that "here the eye conveys to the soul a suggestion of the infinite."

The poet was about to attempt a suitable apostrophe when the spell was broken by the "colonel" volunteering the observation that "for scenic grand'ur I think I hev nevah saw, sah, nothin' thet would thrill any moah as does this; an' I may say I hev been from Texas to Californy an' back agin, twice."

There were in the party some gentlemen and ladies who had also traveled; these agreed with the "colonel" and smiled good-naturedly. Again the "colonel," with commendable fealty to the great State of his nativity, took occasion to remark that "Texas is a continent in itself," as if the thought were inspired by his surroundings, and would not keep for lower levels or more commonplace occasions.

The sun was now sinking below the western horizon, and the soft and golden coloring of the long twilight cast weird shadows over the deep places below. As daylight faded gradually away the full round moon came creeping up the eastern sky, as if making an ineffectual effort to keep in sight of the swifter orb of day. The lingering, deflected rays of the sun blended with the mellow softness of the moonlight, tinting with a wondrous haziness the mountaintops, while the blue shadows in the cañons and valleys below grew darker and yet darker, until they assumed a settled and melancholy gloom. The scene was incomparable, enchanting, indescribable in mere cold words.

Meantime, the superlative "colonel" having subsided, the poet tried his hand with the following result:

SUNSET ON PIKE'S PEAK.

The sun is sinking to his rest,
The fleecy clouds fantastic play
Upon the mountain's shining crest
As if most loth to part with day.

The coldest blue with warmest red
Cast o'er the silent skyland scene
Their varied tints that quickly spread,
While weirdest shadows flit between.

The mountain-tops seem soothed to sleep,
His golden rays so gently go,
Yet he will kiss them — kiss them sweet,
For aye and aye, we surely know.

How like life's close, this sunset rare!
We feel the shades of night come on,
Yet, through the gloom, without despair,
Await the golden paragon.

The locomotive's whistle interrupted his reverie.

Then down, down, down and down we go, each yawning cañon looking like some mighty monster with open jaws waiting to devour us. But steady hands and cool heads manage the brakes and throttle, and we soon cease to fear.

The distant stars are shining brightly; the fragrant pines lift their graceful spires higher and higher, and extend their shadows farther and farther; the naked rocks now peer from mantles of green; the great rocky pinnacles that frowned on us as we went up seem to smile on our return; the dark-green willows and currant bushes wave to and fro in the sighing wind like flags of welcome in the hands of little children; the melodious dashing of the

waterfalls and the "little sharps and trebles" of babbling brooks drift in at the car-windows in joyous greeting; the twinkling starlike lights below us come nearer and nearer; at last the engine ceases its violent puffing as if tired out and exhausted, and the conductor quietly calls, "Manitou!"

Colonel Jackson of Colorado.

[Belford's Magazine.]

COL. IRVING JACKSON belonged recently to the Cripple Creek mining district, though he was formerly of every camp which had the delirium of a temporary excitement since the early 60's.

Frequent changes of abode left him often in doubt as to his actual place of residence, and so, constantly in need of explaining his changes. In the good old days, when the Colonel went East—to St. Louis—to syndicate a new mining venture, he registered from "Colorado," which established beyond peradventure his *genus*, though it might leave in doubt his *species*.

It was the irony of fate that the Colonel should, several times in his experience as a mine-owner, sell out at the wrong time. Perhaps the urgent demands of creditors caused him to sacrifice his prospects and to overrule his better judgment, for he certainly never owned any mine, or fractional interest in one, that he did not regard as a "bonanza."

Col. Irving Jackson was originally from the South—Georgia, perhaps. He had a certain abdominal amplitude, pleasing to look upon, though mildly suggestive of a gourmandic tendency. A slight limp and shuffle in his walk lent confirmation to the suspicion of gout, though he always spoke of it as an "attack of rheumatiz." At any rate, the Colonel had a valid excuse for the gold-headed ebony cane, upon which his portly body swayed heavily when he stood

engaged in animated conversation. The Ben Butler turn of his left eye gave it a sinister expression foreign to his ingenuous volubility, and caused strangers involuntarily to speculate as to its probable focus. About camp he wore a navy-blue shirt, and such combinations of English and American "hand-me-downs" as the varying state of his fortunes would admit. Frequently he was a thing of "shreds and patches."

When Colonel Jackson sallied forth to syndicate a property, he brought out a velvety-looking suit of corduroy, a white shirt, and a silk tie somewhat out of date, but still you could see in it pretensions to respectability. He wore his trousers tucked carefully in the tops of a fancy pair of boots that laced in front. Walking over the marble floor of a hotel corridor, the hob-nails in his soles clattered like the shod feet of a street-car mule on cobblestones.

Do you recall how he spread with a flourish on the Windsor's register: "Col. I. Jackson, Colorado"?—and how the gentlemanly new clerk at once assigned him to "Parlor A"?—for his coming had been heralded by a telegram, ("collect charges.") He did not often stop at the same hotel twice in succession, unless, perchance, he had fortunately made a strike since he was there last. He was known to grow righteously indignant at the presentation of an old hotel bill, to even threaten to withdraw his patronage; then, to close the interview by apologizing for his brusqueness, and cordially inviting the clerk to "Come up an' frolic a month; 'twill do you lots o' good, sah! The fishin' is remarkably fine, you understan'. As to that bill, why, just let me 'O. K.' it, an' you send it in to our Gen'ral Superintendent. Understan' me, 'twill be paid promptly,

sah, promptly." The clerk became obsequious beneath the Colonel's smooth tongue and the sparkle of the Colonel's diamond (?) pin.

At home the Colonel made no pretension to vulgar display. His cabin had one room. In one end of it was a slat-bottomed bunk, upon which was a straw mattress, an old American flag serving as a bedspread. The other furniture was in keeping. In warm weather the star-spangled banner was used as a sheet, and the Colonel patriotically rolled himself up in it and laid down to pleasant dreams, "soothed and sustained by the unfaltering trust" that the prospect of to-day may be the golden or silvern reality of to-morrow.

Colonel Jackson was a reputed bachelor of fifty years. Perhaps he was a bachelor from force of habit. When of a susceptible age his environment was not propitious; that is, there were no eligible women to speak of in his section of the Territory. Afterward, when conditions changed, he had been so long single that he was not inclined to assume the responsibilities of a family. This was the explanation of the Colonel's life current in the camp, but of course it may have been totally erroneous. At least, he was single so far as his most intimate acquaintances knew, and his effusive gallantry to women lent strong confirmation to the suspicion.

Colonel Jackson's special delight was the syndicate. He would figure and work for weeks in collecting together a string of bonded interests, with assays, abstracts of title, engineers' certificates, prospectuses, etc., all covered with red ink and red tape and golden seals. This flaming budget of *prima facie* evidence was often as alluring and seductive

as the modern debenture gold bond of a defunct Western Farm Mortgage Trust Company. The acme of his ambition was achieved when his name was published in the *Daily Crusher* as "the representative of a powerful English syndicate about to close a great deal in valuable mining properties."

The Colonel talked learnedly of geological formations and metallurgical conditions. No prospect was ever called to his attention that did not remind him of some other prospect that had been sold or leased at high figures.

The Colonel's presence in a camp was an inspiration. Faltering hopes were buoyed up by his voluble sophistry.

The plea of confession and avoidance was often resorted to by the Colonel when the facts were at variance with his conclusions — as, indeed, they frequently were. "I know, but," prefaced many replies, full of sophistry, sentiment, sarcasm or soft soap. He was also a skilled heterophemist, and a delightful egotist. To the complaints of the discouraged tenderfoot he was wont to say: "I know, but jest look at Tabor! an' Bowen! an' *me!* Whar would we 'a been, sah, ef we'd given up to unsurmountable obstacles? Shakespeare knowed his business when he writ them burnin' words: 'In th' bright dictionary o' youth, thar is no sich a word ez *Fail!*' No, sah! *Eli* should be th' motto o' th' successful miner. Understan' me, I've no patience with 'em ez is chicken-hearted; they never won, ez th' poet says, 'fair ladies'; an' he might hev added, 'nor pay dirt, neither.'

"Hope wuz intended to spring 'ternal in th' human breast. Ef we *differ* with hope, you understan', th' heart is made sick, ez th' gospel says. Hope an' Faith is twins.

No man, woman nor child never struck it rich thet didn't hope agin hope; an' no syndicate ever got took in thet had no faith. Faith, you understan', is th' *gist* o' things *hoped* fur, an' so th' two goes han' in han'. Yes, sah!"

The Colonel, though laying no especial claims to oratory, held, nevertheless, the enviable reputation of being "no slouch." He was said to be at his best in this line when he had "a couple of drinks ahead." At all local gatherings of his political party, he was in demand as a speaker. On one occasion when the county convention had adopted a platform containing a stirring resolution on free coinage of silver, the subject of our sketch was cheered to the echo after delivering, in strident tones, a speech which had the following impassioned close:

"Th' 'monetization o' silver in '73, sah, wuz a foul an' bloody crime. Yes, Mr. Chairman, a damnable *felony* thet cries out loud to highest heaven—an' beyant. I know Justice may be moah er less slow (hic) like, sometimes; but, sah, understan' me, she gets thar jest th' same.

"Truth scrushed to earth will rise agin,
Fur th' 'ternal years o' God are her'n.

"Now, Mr. Chairman, in the languidge o' th' resolution, I say, as fur me an' mine, give *me* free silver or give *us* death. With free silver, you understan', an' plenty o' it, who, Mr. Chairman, can see the hurrah-scope o' th' near an' 'mediate future o' this heah camp? I repeat, sah, who? (hic) Who?

"Agin, th' total, grand, aggregate output o' our rock-ribbed an' silver-lined, Mr. Chairman—State—young Commonwealth—stimerlated as she will be, you understan', by th' stimerlus, or stimerlant, o' th' renewed an'

increased prosperity will cause th' effete Gold-Bugs in th' East to totter, ef not to tremble, frum center to (hic) 'scumference on their golden thrones in Wall Street.

"Now, Mr. Chairman, with our feet — all fours — understand' me, planted on this solid (hic) silver, Mr. Chairman, plank an' platform, we're bound to go marchin' on to vict'ry, sah! at th' Ides o' November, in great shape, an' all shades can't head us off. I thank you!"

Though the Colonel had never struck anything particularly rich before going to Cripple Creek, he had never lost confidence in his last venture, whatever that may have been.

While waiting for development work to justify his glowing predictions, he semi-occasionally indulged, it is true, in little games of "draw"; but the bets, you know, were only to add zest to the game.

Last summer when the agent of an English syndicate came unheralded to look at some properties Colonel Jackson had been instrumental in calling to its attention, he found the Colonel behind a bar. But the Colonel was not discomfited. With admirable self-possession he put on his coat, whispered to a bystander to look after things, and went out with the visitor. After they had left the saloon, Colonel Jackson apologized to the representative of capital:

"I don't drink nothin' (hic), you understand', cept once in a mighty long while I do wet up a trifle jest to keep from gettin' onsocial an' too slack-twisted — none o' th' boys does. The Keeley (hic) cure would famish to death up heah, sah, dead sure! You understand' me, I'm th' only real gentleman o' leisure in th' camp, an' while I'm waitin' for th' Vice-President o' my Lake County

properties to get back, I jest len' a hand now an' then to some o' my old friends at hustlin' beer, sah, out o' pure (hic) friendship! I don't believe, understan' me, in lettin' fortune sep'rate good friends. Them fellers down thar at th' bar air my kind o' people."

The agent noticed the Colonel appeared a trifle unsteady on his feet, and that his clothes were shinier than on his former visit; but he let him proceed.

"I know 'taint in keepin' eggsactly, but, sah, I won't let ambition, false pride, or th' fickle goddess o' (hic) fortune come atwixt us. Of course, 'tis certain as a foregone conclusion can ever be thet I'll be rollin' in the lap o' wealth an' luxury by this time next year, sah; but I allus believed in standin' in with th' boys, fur, you understan', a feller may be poor hisself some day——. By th' way, you don't mind lettin' me have a V, Majah, till we get th' syndi —(hic)—cate"——

The Colonel did not finish, for he had accidentally stepped into an old shaft in Squaw Gulch, and, despite the effort of the agent to catch him, went to his death.

The news of Colonel Jackson's untimely death spread like wildfire through the camp. Hank Simmonds, the barkeeper at "Pat Casey's"—a rival to "Jackson's place"—remarked to the English agent that evening:

"It's too——bad! The Col'nel was pop'lar with the boys. He took sich a rosy-like side o' things—'liked a frolic,' as he put it. He was n. g. as a saloon man; trusted too much, and there was some as said he was shot too much. 'Taint no use now ter kick 'bout that. Say, stranger, do yer know the old Col'nel was h—l in predicting great things o' that mine, but this is the fust time I ever knowed o' his bein' *strictly in it!*

“This is on me. How will yer hev it, straight or ——. Jest help yerself — you fust!

“Well, stranger, here’s to th’ memory, an’ a green grave fur th’ ole Col’nel.”

There was a clinking of glasses and a gurgling sound. Across the room was a crowd of miners surrounding a table. The silence was only broken by the nervous clattering of the ivory chips. The game must not stop simply because the Colonel had been “called,” and had “passed in his chips.”

“Old Hardridge,” a 59er, removed his pipe long enough to observe:

“Some says th’ Col’nel was more or less riotous-like in his younger days after he sold the ‘Golden Paragon’; others says he spent his wad a-buildin’ a home for old wimmin. Like’s not he blowed it in in part on both. He would save ’bout as much money as a No. 1 sieve would save o’ water. But what’s the dif.? Money’s no good ’cept to be blowed in. Is it, mister? No, yer bet yer sweet life, ’taint. I think a feller orter kinder check up th’ bad he does by bein’ open-handed to th’ good. Thet’s the kind o’ Christian th’ Col’nel was. He didn’t make no bones o’ bein’ one o’ the boys, and he did no blowin’ ’round camp ’bout helpin’ th’ poor.

“Nobody would ever ’a’ knowed that he bought th’ wooden leg for Sandy th’ time he got ketched in th’ blast ef th’ doctor hadn’t give him away. Ef there be a heaven, which I don’t ’spress no opinion on one way nor t’other, yer can bet yer sweet life Col’nel Jackson is *in it*, an’ more’n likely he has got a claim staked and bonded afore now.”

The next day a collection was taken up "for a benefit to the Col'nel," whose available assets made a respectable funeral doubtful. The list was headed by Dave Oyster, the faro-dealer. Dave hadn't said much, but Pat Casey, who circulated the subscription paper, gave it out cold that Dave "came down handsome with a \$50 bill, and remarked that he would do as much for any other rooster who always stood pat by a camp like the Colonel did, and never jumped the game."

The day after the Colonel's funeral a pasteboard box came by express, addressed in a feminine hand. It was from Denver, and was filled with cut flowers. No name accompanied it. Hank Simmonds remarked, as he gazed on the beautiful flowers:

"The Col'nel used ter say to me, a-winkin' confidential-like: 'Every laddy has his lassy, all the same have I.' Of course, I jest thought he was a-joshin' me then, but blamed ef I now don't kinder b'lieve the old cuss had a solid girl, an' that the syndicate he used ter go ter Denver so frequent ter see wore calico. When a feller thinks how the ole Col'nel could shove poetry and sling English, 'twouldn't be so mighty surprisin' ef he had mashed more'n one female heart; besides, when he fixed up, he really looked more or less like a *gentleman*."

This sketch would naturally end here, were it not obviously unfair for Simmonds to unintentionally mislead. The simple fact in regard to the flowers was that Colonel Jackson had ordered them on his last visit to Denver. It may not be irrelevant to say that he did it not so much because he wanted the flowers, though indeed fond of them, as that he wished a certain party with him to be impressed

by a display of a wealth that permits indulgence to fanciful tastes. The young woman at the greenhouse had directed the little box in her own hand when she entered the order, "Both box and bill to be sent on first proximo to Col. I. Jackson, Cripple Creek, Colo." Of course the bill, which came by mail afterward, was never paid, but Colonel Jackson's *death* made no difference as to that.

The flowers were put on the old fellow's grave. Whether they emphasized a life full of disappointments by their tardy arrival; whether they were a silent tribute to that life's hopeful expectancy — its chief characteristic, perhaps — or whether we should scent in their delicate perfume the suggestion of a sweeter life beyond, the life of realized hopes — the reader may decide.

A man of Colonel Jackson's pronounced sentimentality and gallantry might well have been given to scribbling rhymes, though, so far as was known, he had never published anything of the sort. The following verses, found among his papers, were doubtless composed by him in some sober hour when his soul was enraptured by a contemplation of Colorado's charms, for they express his well-known views of his beloved State:

OUT IN COLORADO.

Greatest skies you ever see,
Out in Colorado:
Sun jes' shines eternally,
Out in Colorado:
Air so light, you gulp her in,
Feel so scrumptious, 'tis a sin;
It's th' place to git th' "tin,"
Out in Colorado.

Wimmin, bloomin' as th' roses,
 Out in Colorado:
Men with thousand-dollar noses,
 Out in Colorado:
Kids so smart an' healthy-like,
Soon as weaned they ride a bike:
Things has changed a heap sence Pike
 Come to Colorado.

Grub a-plenty, money, too,
 Out in Colorado:
Water's scarce, but beer will do,
 Out in Colorado:
Ruther buckle down an' stay,
Rustle hard both night and day,
Than to snatch myself away
 From old Colorado.

If old Gabr'l toots his horn,
 Out in Colorado,
On th' resurrection morn,
 Out in Colorado,
Hope I'll never wake, I swear;—
Ruther stay than go up there,
Where th' scen'ry can't compare
 With old Colorado.

The Medicine-Man.

IN "The Great Salt Lake Trail," the late Col. Henry Inman, who knew well the western Indian, says:

"The word 'medicine' in all of the tribes in some sense is a misnomer; it really signifies dreamer, or prophet, and is synonymous with the word 'prophet' in the Old Testament. The Indian form of government may be characterized as a theocracy, and the medicine-man is the high priest. His dreams and his prophecies are held sacred by the people. Should what he tells them turn out to be untrue, the fault lies with themselves, and he claims that his instructions have been disregarded. If by accident his dreams are exactly verified, the confidence of the tribe in their medicine-man surpasses all belief. The medicine lodge is their tabernacle of the wilderness—the habitation of the Great Spirit, the sacred ark of their faith. As in some instances the medicine-men, so-called, are really the doctors of the tribe; and as *medicin* is French for doctor, the early French voyageurs gave this term to these mystery-men, by which they have been known ever since."

The medicine-man is selected not so much on account of his knowledge of *materia medica* as that there should be some one to propitiate the evil spirits, and to ascertain the disposition of the Great Spirit toward a tribe. Speaking negatively, he hangs no Latin diploma with illegible signatures upon the walls of his wigwam; indulges in no unseemly wrangles as to the ethics of his calling; is not jealous of others who have worse or better luck and make more money; keeps no bad-smelling and worse-tasting decoctions on back shelves to mystify and nauseate the sick and alarm the well; does not ask to look at one's tongue, or to feel of his pulse; nor does he look wise and

say, "Have this prescription filled at the corner drug-store, and take as directed; I shall call again to-morrow." He does not wear a silk tile, or carry a cane, nor has he learned the fine art of advertising himself, and so his name is never called out by the ring-master at the circus as being "wanted at the door." Nor does he drive like mad down the principal street of a town, quietly to walk his horses up a back one.

It is said that a medicine-man can predict with unerring certainty the early demise of an ailing member of his tribe whom he dislikes, but never the recovery of his best friend. With a due appreciation of his job, he gives no internal remedies and but few external ones. He has no use for dyspepsia tablets, nerve tonics, or hair invigorators, for no one ever saw an Indian without a good appetite, strong nerves, and a heavy head of black hair. One-night corn cures, eyeglasses, remedies for gout, locomotor ataxia, and many other of the ills that come of over-feeding, or lack of exercise, or the refined dissipations of a twentieth-century civilization, are not required.

Like the peacock, the medicine-man is more ornamental than useful. He does not know a *placebo* from a mustard plaster, or the vermiform appendix from vertigo. He would treat fits and fever, a dislocation of the fibula and a case of fistula all in the same heroic way, and upon the same terms. In short, he is a sort of cross between a Missouri osteopath, a mud bath, and a witch; but he has seldom descended to the barbarous practice of blood-letting.

It is sometimes ordained that a medicine-man shall be permitted to lose a certain number of patients,—rarely

more than six,—and when the limit is reached he must then forfeit his own life as a penalty for not being more proficient in his profession. One would suppose that this salutary rule, while tending to make a medicine-man careful, would perhaps make it difficult for a tribe to keep the office filled, and that the incumbent would resign shortly before he should reach the prescribed limit. But such is not the case. He is as tenacious of office as a member of Congress or an Irish policeman.

The selection of a medicine-man is often a matter of great ceremony, in which applicants for the position submit themselves to much bodily torture,—often self-inflicted,—while the assembled tribe dance, drink fire-water, chant songs, and feast upon cooked prairie-dogs, snakes, and such other dainties as they believe to be possessed of peculiar charms over mind and body. In some tribes a rattle is given to the successful applicant as a badge of office and symbol of power, and when it is sounded it is supposed to cause the evil spirits to depart from the afflicted.

Among Indians a common remedy for smallpox—that dread scourge which decimates so many tribes—is to set a tepee near a stream of water, put the patient inside of it and cover him with a blanket while hot rocks are placed in the water over which he stands. When perspiring freely, the patient rushes out and jumps into the stream,—no matter how cold it may be,—and the chances are that death will soon come to his relief.

In the Yakima tribe it is the custom for a medicine-man to sit beside a pot of boiling water while he watches the actions of a sick brother. After making signs and perfecting his charms, the medicine-man suddenly jumps

upon the patient, bites a hole in his flesh, catches some of the blood in his hands, which he then dips into the boiling water. Thus the evil spirit is removed and the patient is presumably cured.

In an article on the Digger Indian legends, a contributor to "The Land of Sunshine," writing of the theory of disease held by the medicine-men of that tribe, says:

"With them the diagnosis of a case means the discovery of what kind of pain it is that is assailing the victim,—whether wolf-pain, bear-pain, eel-pain, or what. The process is full of dramatic possibilities, swerving in its action between the tragic and ludicrous. The medicine-man, stripped and holding in his hand the skin, claw, or tusk of some animal (or a crude representation, if nothing better is to be had), leaps and runs about the sick-bed in pursuit of the malignant spirit. The hypothesis is that only a wolf can overtake a wolf-pain. Often the chase is kept up for hours, and the doctor may have well-nigh exhausted the fauna of the place before he finally lights on the proper animal. In the meanwhile no morsel of food or drop of water is allowed to pass the sufferer's lips, and the women, with beating of hands and stamping of feet, keep up the perpetual drone of the medicine-song, a chant so harrowing and dirge-like that it is a wonder the patient survives the first hour. In one case the medicine-man seized a live dog, and, indifferent to its frantic yelps and howls, bore it with long leaps and jumps around and around the sick man, till he had demonstrated that it was *not* a dog-pain that was doing the mischief. It was finally determined that it was a white-deer-pain, the fleetest kind of all. He pursued it in full cry into the woods, and at length ran it to cover under a stone, from whence he pinched it up between his thumb and forefinger, and carried it in triumph to the house. After a long and eloquent address, in which he exhorted it to return to Was-a-hoo and trouble men no longer, he drowned it ceremoniously in a little bowl, and then poured it into the fire. The patient died, but the mourners had the satisfaction of knowing that his last moments were free from pain.

"*"Otto hoppe, I pity him,"* said the doctor. *"But I caught the white deer too late."*

The olden-time passengers on the Santa Fé route will recall "Shorty," a Mohave medicine-man and beggar, who in knit undershirt and blue overalls always met the overland trains at the Needles. One day his sixth patient died, and then the tribe built a pyre, and poor "Shorty" went to the Mohaves' happy hunting-grounds in a cloud of smoke through the eye of the Needles. Whether this treatment of a family physician is too harsh for civilization to adopt, may be debatable. If you think it is not, suppose that you ask your doctor what he thinks about it. Are not six mistakes rather too few, unless, of course, they all occur in one's own family, and within a short period? Do you not think that a physician should have a fair "show for his white alley," and only be killed when it is reasonably necessary for the due protection of society, or when he writes "M. D." after his name on a hotel register?

The Passing of Jack Thompson.

[Overland Monthly.]

I.

THE VENUE.

THE Thompsons came to Kansas in a "prairie schooner." Before the time of railroads it was a common sight, this white canvassed argosy on wheels peacefully and silently navigating the billowy sea of far-stretching prairies. Its locomotion was slow, to be sure, but it had the fascination of boundless freedom, for this trackless and mighty main in those early days offered unobstructed sailing to all.

When adrift, this curious craft often resembled a Noah's Ark of domestic animals, with household goods, hardware, and tow-headed children, galore. Above the feed-trough at the rear were usually fastened some cane-bottomed heir-looms that had perhaps seen pioneer service elsewhere, or a coop of semi-suffocated barnyard favorites. When anchored, the smoke gracefully curling from the camp-fire, the fatigued horses lariatied for the night, the dogs stretched out upon the ground, and the hungry children whiffing the appetizing fragrance of frying bacon, the old hulk came to be regarded by its roving occupants as home.

The Thompsons had, *en route*, the company of neighbors, but their gregarious proclivities led them to settle on bottom land, while the Thompsons pushed on in search of the jack-oak.

There seemed to be almost a suggestion of crime in the

very location of the house they finally purchased from a discouraged settler. It was a dilapidated one-and-a-half-story affair, with basement, reached from the old Santa Fé road by an unfrequented trail, which wound through the woods and dense underbrush that lined the Big Muddy bottoms, thence up a long steep and stony incline to the edge of a projecting and precipitous bluff. At one side was a stone corral, well trampled and fringed with dog fennel, and a little farther on a stone stable, covered with an old cutting of prairie grass. Back of the house the unfenced prairies stretched wearily for miles and miles to the westward.

From this eyrie-like spot, hiding on the one hand or retreat on the other was equally easy. No one could approach in the daytime from the main road without being seen climbing the hill, nor could any from the prairie side escape detection of the spy-glass that Thompson kept adjusted for long range on the rude mantel near his rifles and revolvers. The front door was unpainted, and being some three feet from the ground, and without steps by which it could be reached, was entirely useless. Therefore it did not matter that there was no doorknob, or that the door itself was nailed securely. A rusty cultivator emphasized the probability of a cornfield somewhere near, though not visible from the house. Tall and numerous sunflowers encroached upon the few crooked limbs of cottonwood trees known as the "wood-pile," furnishing in season convenient hiding-places for rattlesnakes, with which the bluff was infested. An old two-horse wagon, the paint on which had long since vanished under the scorching sun, contained a barrel which explained the absence of well or cistern.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the Thompsons, as well as the few families that occupied this lonely ranch before them, rested under certain imputations, which the early settlers cast upon any who chose such a forlorn and uncanny place of residence.

Jack Thompson was perhaps forty years of age, with steel-gray eyes that wandered restlessly. His wife was his junior by at least ten years. Both had been raised on the frontier,—she of better family than he. When a young man in Missouri, Thompson kept a livery stable, so that he drove spirited horses whenever he took his “solid girl” to drive. She, as the “pretty, plump, and spunky black-eyed gal o’ Squire Jackson’s,” was early admired by the youth of Clay county. Whether it was Jack Thompson’s broad shoulders, his fine team of bays, or what not, that attracted her maiden fancy, Sallie Jackson eloped with him one moonlight night. Mrs. Thompson’s father remaining obdurate in his opposition to her husband, the latter in time moved with his young wife over into Kansas.

Their only child at the time this story opens was a curly-haired and stout little chap of four. A mere scar on the prairie sod close by the house, on which in summer some straggling wild verbenas grew, marked the grave of their baby-girl, who had died two years before.

It was February. The desolate and dreary prairie was covered with a light blanket of snow, save here and there bare spots where the cheerless wind had swept. The deflecting rays of the cold, low-hanging sun caused the burnished glass in the western windows of the house to blaze as if afire, and to seem to melt the freezing air. A half-dozen hounds bayed forth vociferous welcome to the horse-

man, their returning master, now ascending the steep road. A frail, dejected woman peeped through the half-drawn paper curtain of the low window, and seeming to gather assurance opened the door and stood upon its threshold.

It was Squire Jackson's youngest daughter — no longer plump, and her eyes dimmed from their old-time luster.

"Well?" she said interrogatively.

"'T ain't no use, Sal. Th' horse was found with my halter on her, an' that's enough to convict th' Apostle Paul."

"Why don't you go to old Judge Gilman? Tell him as how little Bobbie was taken sick, an' how you just borrowed th' mare to go for the doctor?"

"Sal, will you dry up? I tells you 'tain't no use. He'd jest say 't was fer me to make it wash with the jury if I could."

"Why couldn't you, Jack?"

"Why? Because I couldn't, I tells you. Do you hear that? If I'd 'a' went to th' old Doc's house first an' had been ketched there, it might work, fer then he could swear fer me."

"Well, I'd be honest an' jest tell why Doc Tuff ain't on your side."

"I say 't ain't no use. This borrowin' of horses is gettin' to be too all-fired common. My lawyer, ol' Parsons, says it's a mighty thin go,—though he do say if I'll swear to it hard, an' you'll stand up to the same racket, he'll do the best he can; but he didn't make no bones of tellin' me his own mind as to th' outcome."

"Of course I'll swear for you, an' you know I'll do it cheerful, too. But what else did he say?"

"He said 't would be deader medicine if we could prove a aliby while we had our hands in. 'T is easy to see he don't take no stock in the sick-child racket."

"God knows 'tis the gospel truth, an' I hain't afeerd but what there'll be some of the jury that'll know the truth when they sees it. I recollect a-hearin' ol' Jedge Carson, when he was a-ridin' the circuit an' used to stay with pap, say you could count safe on a-findin' at least ten honest men in his box."

"Mebbe that rule would go them days in Missouri. But Jedge Carson was never up fer horse-stealin' in Kansas, was he? I guess not. A feller has jest about got to prove hisself everlastin'ly innocent, or he's a goner."

"How does you make that out?"

"Ol' Parsons says that th' Supreme Court in Cassidy's case made a law that th' havin' of a thing right away after it's stole is enough. That makes out a *primer face*—or some kind of a Latin languidge—case, which means in plain United States that you are in for it,—unless you can get out."

"Mebbe, Jack, if you tell 'em of your conversion an' a-joinin' of th' church two-years ago down to th' Stranger Creek camp meetin', 't would help. Elder Berry would recomember how you stumbled 'long up to the mourner's bench, an' give up so complete."

"Yes: an' he knows how darned quick I backslid. That'd make a fine case, now, wouldn't it? What fer show would a feller have with nine out of ten Methodists, mebbe, on the jury. I'd be no bigger'n a ten-spot."

"But, mebbe God would move 'em to overlook your faults,—fer who is there that hasn't his own? Besides,

mebbe there'll be some on the jury as isn't perfessers, an' will be prejudiced fer you. An' mebbe Judge Gilman would tell 'em that you was up fer horse-stealin', an' not fer backslidin'."

"Mebbe he would, Sal. But what does you know 'bout juries? Darned little. A feller had better flip an' settle amicable, if he can, every time. 'Pears to me I'd ruther jest save time, an' let the ol' Jedge crack away with his little ol' sentence."

"Thompson, you sha'n't do no sich a thing. I'll go to town too when your bail gives you up, an' I'll stay by you."

"But, Sal, I'm mightily afeerd you'll make a bobble of it."

"How'd I behave that time of th' fire back in Clay county? Who was th' first to run out of th' ol' shack? Answer me that, you Thompson."

"Yes, I knows you stood pat then. But I wasn't skeered. I jest run out to—to see if I couldn't find help."

"Jest as if all out of doors had suddently come miles acrost th' prairies to put out a measly little fire. Jack Thompson, you're a coward. Do you hear me? *You're a coward!*"

"Don't let's have no sass now, with th' pen a-starin' me in th' face. If you knowed what's afore you,—not exceedin' seven year a grass widder,—you wouldn't be so brash-like with your tongue."

"How does it come to be seven year for takin' a fifty-dollar mare, an' only five if you take ten thousand dollars, as that bank cashier did?"

"I reck'n it's 'cause th' farmers have been a-tinkerin' with th' statutes. There's no jestice in it, as I see."

"Well, it do beat all th' way laws air fixed. But say, honey, I didn't mean to be cross. 'T ain't no use to give up as long as I hain't your widow jest yet awhile. Lor' me! What air you sittin' there fer? I clear forgot. Get off and come in; supper's a-waitin'."

II.

THE TRIAL.

The State *vs.* Thompson was on call. The court-house was filled to overflowing with curious spectators and idle hangers-on. A number of witnesses were loitering about the courtyard waiting to testify. Here and there knots of sunbrowned farmers discussed Thompson's case. A few expressed no opinion. Many said he was undoubtedly guilty. All agreed that there must be an organized band of horse-thieves operating in the county, and suspicion fell on Jack Thompson as being a member thereof, partly because his farming seemed to be a mere pretense, but more especially because of his sudden disappearances and his as frequent returns after several days of absence, often with a new horse, concerning which, when questioned, he always declared either that he had won it at a race, or "swapped for it."

Everybody who spoke of Thompson's wife at all spoke well of her, and expressions of sympathy for her were frequent. "She ought to leave him, for he treats her shameful," was the general verdict as to her; while as to him it found expression in a muttered, "We've no use for

the lazy, drunken thief and gambler," often accompanied by curses in menacing tones.

There was no mistaking the temper of the community, and no one was more sensitive to it and its demands for a victim upon whom its indignant wrath might be visited than old Parsons, the defendant's counsel. He realized fully the delicacy of his task. Technical defenses would only result in mob violence.

After some delay incident to numerous challenges, a jury of "twelve good and lawful men" was duly impaneled and sworn, and was at once confronted by Mr. Idleman, the county attorney,—a man of greater amplitude of abdomen than of intellect. He had, however, one of the elements of a successful prosecutor in a new country, and so he read in a loud voice and with ponderous emphasis the information, in which the offense of horse-stealing was set forth with due and imposing formality of legal expression. He then proceeded to state the case the State expected to make, and was followed by Parsons, who in a low voice very briefly stated the defense.

Then the prosecution introduced its evidence. The ownership of the mare was proven to be in Deacon Ezekiel Snoddy. Then the circumstances of her disappearance in the night from the barn of her owner,—of her being found next morning tied to a post in front of a saloon in the town of —, fourteen miles from the point of asportation,—of the defendant being seen hurriedly riding her into town at daybreak, and of his being intoxicated when arrested, were all narrated by the witnesses. All of which, of course, it was shown occurred in the County of —, and State of Kansas. Then the State rested its case.

It was remarked by a number of bystanders, who had heard of the adroitness of defendant's counsel and of his skill as a cross-examiner, that he must have considered the case of the State impregnable; for there was scarcely a question put by way of cross-examination.

The defendant then took the witness stand. Under the skillful handling of his attorney he told in a simple way his story. Briefly it was this: His little child was taken sick on the night in question; he left home about two o'clock, taking a halter with him; upon going to his corral he found the bars had been thrown down (probably by some mischievous person or enemy), and his horses had gone to the woods; he then decided to go to his nearest neighbor, Deacon Snoddy, and borrow one; arriving there, he concluded, on account of the lateness of the hour, that he wouldn't awaken the sleeping household, but would go to the barn, take a horse, and explain matters fully to the Deacon on returning with Doctor Tuff in the morning; that when he arrived in the town it was a little after daylight; the night having been cold, and he being faint and chilled by his long ride, he determined on taking a good stiff drink to brace him up before going over to the Doctor's residence; that after taking the drink in the "Red Front Saloon," (for it was before the days of prohibition,) he sat down by the stove in the bar-room to get warm, and must have fallen fast asleep, for the next thing he remembered was his arrest; that he then sent word by the constable to the Doctor to go out to see his child.

On cross-examination, Thompson admitted that he understood the child was found up and playing when the Doctor arrived; that he had not previous to his arrest

said anything to the bar-tender or to anyone else about his child's sickness; admitted that he had once had a quarrel about a division fence some time before with the owner of the mare; he further frankly admitted that the halter found on the mare belonged to him.

When Thompson was excused, a smile spread over the faces of the bystanders. Evidently he had not made a favorable impression. He had not looked at the jury, but kept his restless eyes on the sheriff, as if imploring his kindly protection. Such expressions as, "Too thin," "He's dead sure to walk," and "How long do you think he'll get?" were exchanged in audible whispers.

Then the pale little woman in black, whose eyes had been riveted on the face of her husband during the narration of his story, took the stand. In a low voice she told of being awakened in the night by little Bobbie's croup; of her husband starting for his horse to go after the Doctor; of her using the simple remedies at hand, and of Bobbie's being up and playing when the Doctor came. On cross-examination she admitted her husband had quarreled with Deacon Snoddy, but stated that she thought it had been made up at the time her husband was converted.

Here a titter went around the audience that occasioned the old bailiff to rap on the table three times with his knife and to look threateningly at the standing men.

The witness became excited; the color came to her thin face; she sat erect and her eyes brightened. Elevating her voice, her nostrils quivering with passion, she continued:

"Those fool men may laugh, but men,"—addressing the jury—"Jack was converted at the time our baby-girl

died, and he would 'a' stayed, had not the drink habit got such a grip on him, as it has on lots of men I know who laughed out loud just now. O, I know you, Tom Green, and —”

The Court interfered here, and cautioned the witness to confine her answers to the questions asked.

The witness proceeded:

“Before Jack got religion, Mr. Snoddy came over during the revival, an' brought along his hymn-book an' Testament with him, an' sung, an' read, an' prayed, to beat all out of doors. He said he was off about that fence, an' asked the good Lord to forgive him for the scrap, too,—which I doubt if he did,—an' said that neighbors should dwell together in peace, an' all that kind of stuff.”

The Court again admonished the witness to state only what was said and done, and to keep her opinions to herself.

“Yes, sir: as I was saying, the old hypocrite — there he sets now — said he was sorry too, and he won't dispute a-sayin' it neither, an' then he asked Jack an' me down to th' camp-meetin', an' took on as if the Kingdom had come. Then he went, an' th' next Sunday Jack riz up for prayers, an' before I knowed what was on, ole Elder Berry an' that there man Deacon Snoddy was a-hustlin' Jack for'ard to the mourners' bench, both on 'em a-shoutin' glory an' amen at every jump; an' afore the meetin' broke Jack was a-singin' *'While the Lamp Holds Out to Burn,'* an' everybody was so happy that I couldn't keep th' tears back.”

Here the witness, overcome by the memories which her narrative recalled, fell to weeping, and there was an oppor-

tunity for Idleman to collect his thoughts, and renew the unfortunate cross-examination. The prosecuting witness leaned over and whispered in his ear, to which the County Attorney made a responsive nod.

"Mrs. Thompson, he said sternly, "do you mean for these gentlemen here — the jury — to understand that at the time of this larceny — that at or just before this horse was took — there was no bad blood betwixt the families of the prosecuting witness and your said husband?"

"No, sir; no, siree," the witness answered emphatically.

The County Attorney looked around the room with an air of victory, and proceeded deliberately to the attack, as he returned to his pocket the little roll of fine-cut wrapped in tissue paper:

"Then you admit that there was bad blood?"

"I do."

"Will you be kind enough, Mrs. Thompson, to state wherein and whereof that bad blood consisted of?"

"Yes, sir, if you wants me to, an' it has any bearin' on th' case."

The prosecuting witness pulled nervously at the shiny coat-sleeve of the County Attorney, but as he had repeatedly done so before only to suggest irrelevant questions, Idleman paid no attention to him.

"Madam, since we have started in, we might as well go on; but I want the jury not to lose sight of the fact that we air a-tryin' your said husband for larceny of a bay mare, and not the prosecutin' witness for bein' a Christian. You may proceed,—state fully."

Idleman emphasized the last two words.

"Well, one night, as we was about to get into our wagon

to come home from th' revival, Mr. Snoddy says to my husband, says he, 'Brother Thompson, supposin' Mrs. Snoddy gets up in front on th' big spring seat with you,—she's a-gettin' old, and crippled up like with rheumatiz,—an' I'll ride behind with Sister Thompson,'—a-meanin' me. We hadn't more'n got started till Mr. Snoddy said, says he, 'Your seat, Sister Thompson, would be a mighty sight comfortabler if you had a back to it.' An' then I felt his arm a-pressin' close agin my back. I edged away, an' he edged closer; every time th' wheel struck a rut he slid up, an' didn't slide back neither when th' rut come his side. Then —"

"I object as incompetent, irrelevant, and immaterial," shouted the County Attorney, aroused by the titter that went around the room. "This has nothin' to do with the bad blood asked for, and is not responsive to my question."

The Judge removed his corn-cob pipe from his mouth, and wearily stretching his long legs on the corner of the bench, announced:

"Mr. Idleman, you asked the witness to 'state fully.' I don't think after doin' that, you ought to be allowed to object to her manner of doin' it. What the witness is about to state may or may not be material; no one can tell till she's stated. So I overrule the State's objection, Mr. County Attorney, and give you an exception, and you can move to strike out after the witness shall have done."

"Very well," said Idleman, obsequiously bowing to his Honor, and motioning to Mrs. Thompson to proceed.

"Then, he put his right arm tighter than I thought was becomin', an' him a deacon, an' I was so provoked I didn't know what to do. I didn't want to make no scene with his

poor invalid wife, an' her a good Christian woman as I thought then. So I jest pinched his hand as hard as I could, but he only hugged me harder. It took all th' Christian grace I had to keep from yellin', an' he was afeared too, for when I was goin' to say somethin', he'd clap his hand over my mouth. An' we kept on that-a-way till we got to their bars, an' they got out, an' th' ol' hypocrit thanked my husband perfusely. I was afeared to say anythin' to Jack; with his quick temper; so I jest made up my mind I'd put on my bonnet next mornin' an' go over to Mrs. Snoddy's—which I did—an' tell her jest how worldly her pretendin' husband was. After I'd set awhile an' we had went over th' list to be baptized th' next Sunday at the ford,—an' she had asked me to stay to dinner,—I up an' tole her jest why I couldn't, as a Christian woman, accept her kind invite. She got boilin' mad, an' lowed if I hadn't pinched Ezekiel's arm he never would 'a' hugged me, an' that it was all my fault. The pretendin' ol' thing said Ezekiel had never hugged her a-comin' home since they were married, but she 'lowed that he might if she'd pinched him for a signal. She jest kept right on a-tryin' to put the blame onto me, till I left in a dudgin' an' we hain't spoke since. Then as I was a-comin' home, who should I see a-cuttin' 'cross th' corn-field but that there same old hypocrite, an' him a deacon, too. When he gets up close enough he says, says he,—all a-beamin' too,—'Sister Thompson,—'

"I says, says I, 'Don't sister me, you old pretender.'

"He says, 'What's up now?'

"I says, says I, 'I've been down an' told your wife on you; that's what's up.'

“‘Told her what?’ says he, a-pretendin’ ignorance.

“‘You know well enough,’ says I.

“Then he says, says he,—him a-gettin’ closer up, an’ reachin’ for my hand, — ‘Sister — or Mrs. Thompson —’

“‘Stand back!’ says I, indignant.”

Here the prosecuting witness moved restlessly, and whispered in the receptive ear of counsel for the prosecution, and that functionary perceiving a dangerous crisis was imminent, proceeded to object and to move to “strike out,” getting into an animated discussion with the Court over the relevancy of the testimony. Counsel for the defense, shrewdly realizing that with the Court on his side the matter would be presented with sufficiently convincing potency, said nothing. The Court, after overruling the objections and motions, and allowing exceptions to the State, again admonished the witness to state only facts.

A number of the open-mouthed bystanders whispered together,—the consensus of opinions being that Judge Gilman was too learned in the law to permit the forceful Idleman successfully to pull the wool over his eyes. Parsons simply winked at his co-counsel.

The witness resumed:

“Well, as I was sayin’, that old pretendin’ hypocrite there” —

“The witness will not express opinions, but state facts. Don’t call any names, Mrs. Thompson,” cautioned the Court.

“No, sir, I won’t; but I could, though. Well, after that old pretender, an’ him a deacon too, got up a-close enough to shake hands, he went on to say as how I knowed th’ seat had no back to it, an’ that he jest didn’t mean

nothin' but to keep me from a-fallin out back'ards. An' then — th' cheek of him! — he 'lowed if I hadn't pinched him, — as if I did before he did nothin'. You see, he was jest everlastin'ly bound to put it on to me, jest as that old huzzy, his wife, done. Then he says, says he: 'Sister — or Mrs. Thompson, t'ain't no use in neighbors havin' words or hard feelin's agin one another; suppose we try to compromise it?' says he.

"'How can we,' says I, 'as honest Christians, compromise with Satan?'

"'Well, of course,' says he, 'we can't do that if huggin' is a sin, but —' says he, a-raisin' his hand to threaten — 'I'll tell you what's what, if you ever tells your husband, or anyone else, about that ride, I'll be dod-durned if I don't tell the State's Attorney your husband belongs to the Jones gang of horse-thieves.' Them air his exact words. Well, then I got so mad at the old cowardly pretender that I jest rode off an' left him a-callin' fer me to come back an' make up. Do you think I went back? Not much!"

"'Why didn't you tell your husband about his threat?'" propounded the persistent prosecutor, with an expansive feeling of self-admiration visible in his countenance.

"'Why didn't I? Well, because I knowed what old Snoddy said was a libel. He knowed all th' time he was a-talkin' that Jack was no bigger a horse-thief than his own self, an' him a deacon. An' I knowed if I told Jack that there would be a world of trouble; so I jest considered it my Christian duty to lay low; an' so I jest kept mum, an' said nothin' till now, — an' I reckon I wouldn't now if you, Mr. Idleman, hadn't started in on it.'"

The round of half-suppressed laughter that greeted this last statement stung the usually obtuse Idleman to the quick. Seeking to recover his composure, he nervously fumbled the court files, and made a side remark to the prosecuting witness, for the benefit of the jury, to the effect that he guessed an intelligent jury would know how much of her testimony to believe, seeing that she was an interested witness.

At last the witness was dismissed. Old Parsons's eyes twinkled, and he stroked his mustache and goatee, and ran his hand through his thin gray hair with an air of extreme satisfaction at the result of his adversary's cross-examination. Thompson's case had evidently been strengthened in the minds of the bystanders.

Then numerous motions were made, and special instructions were asked, all presumably aimed at getting before the jury the real points at issue. The Court then with greater verbosity than perspicuity instructed the jury as to the law, laying particular stress on the intention of the defendant, and also on the presumption which arises when recently stolen property is found in the possession of another.

The respective counsel then harangued the jury in the customary voluble and vociferous manner. Idleman and Parsons were both in their shirt-sleeves, the latter *sans* vest and *sans* collar.

At length the jury retired to consider solemnly of its verdict. Soon a loud and prolonged rapping on the door of the jury-room imported a probable agreement. Then the twelve good men and true slowly filed in, the old bailiff bringing up the rear. No one could guess the result

from their sphinx-like countenances. The clerk received the verdict from the foreman, and proceeded to read it in a deliberate tone. When he reached the closing words, he hesitated as if astonished, glanced at the County Attorney, and said, "NOT GUILTY."

III.

THE CONVICTION.

It was dusk.

A mule team stood lazily before the "Red Front" saloon. A wagon-cover was loosely thrown over some sacks of meal in the wagon behind the seat. Before long Thompson came out, (a long-necked bottle projecting from one of the pockets of his sack-coat,) climbed to a seat beside the waiting woman, placed a six-shooter between them, and sullenly commanded her to drive on.

On their way home Thompson told his wife that some one said it was her testimony, and her manner of giving it that won the case.

"Didn't I tell you what Jedge Carson said about a jury havin' ten honest men on it? I jest prayed hard to convert th' other two," she observed.

"But how did you come to give 'em that round-up on th' Deacon, Sal?"

"Well, I jest got kinder desp'rate when I see what a poor cut you made of it. Our lawyer said to jest keep cool; that he'd let me off easy on th' direct, 'cause he knowed th' County Attorney would give me a chance to get in my work on th' cross. An' it seems I did."

"Sal, did th' ol' Deacon hug you, as you let on like?"

"Of course he did. Wasn't I on oath? Does you reck'n

I'd swear to a lie to save you, or anyone else, Jack Thompson? No, siree! You know I wouldn't."

"I'm mighty glad he did hug you, fur it saved me dead sure from goin' up to Lansing. But I'm blamed if I sees how you come to give it up on th' stand in th' powerful way you did, Sal."

"It jest popped into my head when I see Idleman was tryin' to make out you stole th' mare, to get even with th' ol' Deacon, or else to make it seem onlikely that you'd do your borryin' of him. It did go hard to tell it right out before all them men; but I done it, 'cause you was my husband, an' 'cause I didn't want th' neighbor children to throw it up to Bobbie that his pap was in th' pen for horse-stealin'. I couldn't stand that."

"Well, ol' girl, you've broke th' record as a winner. If I hadn't got full, an' that fool Hank Blackman had 'a' showed up as he agreed fair he would do, th' Deacon's mare would 'a' passed along, layin' by daytimes in th' brush, an' travelin' nights, till she'd 'a' been over the line in Clay county long ago. 'T ain't but fair, Sal, I oughter tell you now, a-seein' as how you played white by me an' saved me by your tall swearin'. I reck'n I'm th' fust horse-thief as ever got off in eastern Kansas."

"Thompson, does you mean to own up to me that you did steal th' Deacon's mare?"

"That's what, Sal. You see, I agreed to do it that night, an' Bobbie's a-gettin' sick gave me an excuse to you fur to slide. An' that's th' everlastin' truth, too."

"An' you belong to th' Jones gang?"

"Yep; that's 'bout th' size of it."

"An' you'd have me swear to a lie to keep you from th' law?"

"In course I would; an' you'd do it too,—if not for me, you'd do it fur little Bob."

Thompson here took the bottle from his pocket and placed it to his lips, as he already had done several times. His wife watched him askance. She knew that any protest from her would be received with curses, but she had grown as insensible to them as any woman compelled to drag through life tied to an ill-tempered drunkard ever grows.

"Thompson, seems as though we'd had 'nough trouble for one day. I wish you wouldn't drink no more till mornin'. Please try jest this once? I don't want Bobbie to see me a-cryin' when we get home."

"Darn you; look on your book, will you? I don't want no woman who has been a-carryin' on with another man, an' keepin' quiet till it's forced out o' her, to be tellin' me what to do. Do you hear me?" Thompson sullenly responded with a most tantalizing expression.

There was a period of silence, during which the little woman, already overwrought by the nervous strain of the trial and now so rudely shocked by the cruel audacity of her husband, tried to swallow the lump which seemed to come persistently into her throat.

"Thompson, air you goin' to lick old Snoddy?" she ventured.

"No, you bet I ain't. He can hug you agin if he likes to fur all of me."

"Thompson,—answer me true now,—supposin' th' Deacon had 'a' went on an' done th' very worst a man could do,—an' then, supposin' I'd told it on th' stand, an' it had saved you from the pen, wouldn't you 'a' done nothin' to him for it?"

"I don't know as I'd 'a' made much fuss 'bout it."

"*Take that, you cowardly whelp!*" shouted a masculine voice from the rear end of the wagon.

As Thompson fell backward, his wife, turning, saw through the puff of smoke a man half concealed by some meal-sacks, holding in his right hand a revolver which he had quietly slipped from the seat as he had listened to Thompson's confession and audacious cruelty.

"Hank Blackman!" gasped the confused woman.

"Yes, the same old Hank what loved you back in Clay; he's been a-hangin' 'round these parts more'n you know, Sally, a-thinkin' mebbe you'd have use fur him sometime."

"Don't tell me that you love me; you're a horse-thief an' a — O, Hank, why *did* you do it?"

"'Cause I couldn't stan' it no longer to hear Thompson abuse you and refuse to fight fur you, Sally. I won't let no woman be used in no sich way, all the more you; 'sides, what he said 'bout my b'longin' to the Jones gang's a lie. I only trained with 'em to be near you, an' that's the God's truth."

"O, Hank, you oughter 'a' waited."

"Wait? Haven't I been a-waitin' patient all these years, an' seen you a-droopin' an' a-fadin' under bad treatment? It's done now. I may swing, but I'll know that you won't have to suffer no more from *him*."

The pale woman sat motionless and silent. At last with effort she sobbed —

"Hank, —" but speech failed her.

Blackman caught her in his arms as she was falling from the wagon. When she had revived, he said:

"Sally, 'tain't like you to give up so; be brave; re-

member that Hank's your friend, your lover, and will wait for you. I must leave you now. If the vigilance committee comes to your house to-night, jest tell 'em Thompson is already done for,—was killed by some one a-shootin' from behind on your way home."

Blackman drew the frail form of the woman to him, kissed her, and disappeared in the darkness into the tall grass.

The poor woman quietly placed her shawl over her dead husband's face, picked up the reins, and with eyes staringly fixed upon the mules, drove on.

The neighbors gave it out that although Jack Thompson was undoubtedly "slick," he could not and did not elude the vigilance of the "committee," whose unerring judgment could always be safely trusted to supplement a doubtful verdict; and so the credit of his passing was with many a sly and knowing wink appropriated by others.

The Opening of the Cherokee Strip.

ADJOINING the State of Kansas on the south is a region about one hundred and fifty miles in length by sixty in breadth, formerly known as "The Cherokee Strip." Portions of it are exceedingly fair, and during its occupancy by the Indians its beauty and fertility were so greatly exaggerated by the "boomers" that it achieved the reputation of being a veritable paradise.

Just before this "garden spot of the world," as it was often called, was thrown open to settlement, a vast concourse of people—home-seekers, speculators, and adventurers—from all sections of the Union gathered round its borders in waiting for the much-heralded and momentous event. They came in wagons and in carriages, on horseback and afoot, in smoking-cars and in Pullmans. The rich and the poor, the strong and the weak, the youthful and the aged, white and black, male and female, saint and sinner,—all were there. It was as though a mighty tidal wave had swept over the entire United States, and in receding had left its heterogeneous salvage of humanity strewn everywhere along the margins of this hitherto forbidden and "enchanted land."

The observations and experiences of one "boomer" are told in the following verses:

Jest haul up a stool an' chuck down yer grip.

You see, I'm fresh back from that Cherokee Strip:

Hain't flyin' so high as I did when I went;
Am all busted up; this here life in a tent
Is cracked up too far—
It's no palace car.

Say, wus you ever down to Orlando?
That town near th' Strip called Orlando?

No? Well, I'll tell you some facts (though I bet
On nothin' dead shore any more: I ferget
So all-fired easy) sence you asks so perlite.
Reporter-man, eh? Then I reckon I might
As well light in an' tell
All th' things what befell
Unto me that there time at Orlando—
In that bloomin' old town of Orlando.

'Twus September 16th, o' th' year '93,—
Ketch onto th' date an' listen to me.
It makes me smile yet to think o' that ride;
All creation wus there an' sev'ral beside,—
A whalin' big band,
All red-hot fer land,
Th' land that you see from Orlando—
That sweet-scented town called Orlando.

Before I left home to go to th' Strip,
"A Garden o' Eden" wus on ev'ry lip.
They said that each quarter could easy be sold
Fer at least two thousand dollars in gold;
But they talked through their hat,
So you don't care fer that,
No more than you do fer Orlando—
That measly old town of Orlando.

I'd lived here in Kansas, an' thought I wus tough,
An' able to take whatever come rough;
B'lieved I wus as hard as a man ever got,
An' would have a tight cinch on a fine corner lot;
So I had a big pity
Fer them chaps from th' city,
All a-standin' in line at Orlando—
In that sunburnt old town of Orlando.

I trained a swift bronco fer months beforehand,
Thought nothin' could beat him a-runnin' fer land;
I'd got him down fine to half-mile a minute,
An' counted on how I'd be right strictly in it,

When it come to that race,
Advertised to take place,
On that Saturday noon at Orlando —
At that sizzlin' old town of Orlando.

Fer five scorchin' days we stood in th' ranks,
Fer five weary nights we slept on th' banks
Of a dried-up creek near "Booth No. 2,"
Each waitin' his turn; an' gee, how it blew!

Wus it hot? You've hearn tell
How th' same is in — well,
That there climate wus wuss in Orlando —
It's th' south side of h—l at Orlando.

It's hard to tell now which was reely th' wust —
Th' cussed hot wind, or th' plaguey dry dust
That drifted in clouds so almighty thick
You c'd punch th' air full o' holes with a stick;

An' I want to state here,
That business in beer
Wusn't slow in that town of Orlando —
That parched-up old town of Orlando.

It looked purty much like a big country fair,
Fer all kinds o' things wus a-goin' on there, —
Faro, an' shell games, right out on th' grass,
With water a-sellin' at "five cents a glass."

Jest betwixt you an' me,
There wus nothin' much free,
But th' scrappin' an' air at Orlando —
That free-fer-all town of Orlando.

Of course, there wus some as fell by th' way —
Italics all gone, as you printer-men say;
I felt mighty bad that they hadn't th' sand
To last 'em clean through to th' "Promised Land,"

But I kind o' think now
They was lucky; somehow
Death was better than life in Orlando —
Oklahoma's own hades, Orlando.

At last th' hour come, as most ev'rything does.
We hauled up in line; I should reckon there wus
A full thirty thousand,—kids, women an' men,
All red-hot to skip; an' jest about then

Someone teched off a gun,

Fer th' signal to run,

An' that crowd lit out from Orlando—

That "king fer a day" called Orlando.

All sorts o' contraptions with horses an' mules,
A-scrougin' fer places like so many fools;
Sometimes they'd be single, ag'in in big squads;
That race wus a sight fer archangels an' gods.

My opinion is, sir,

That old man Ben Hur

Would 'a' got badly left at Orlando—

It's a good town to leave, that Orlando.

Th' railroad trains wus a-huggin' th' steel,
Th' bicycle fellers kept spinnin' each wheel,
An' ev'ry fool man set to git in ahead,
An' many wus throwed, an' some wus left dead.

Gee! Excitement biled high,

When Cow Creek drawed nigh,

An' we wus ten mile from Orlando—

Ten mile from that burg called Orlando.

I hates to relate, but sech is th' case,
There wusn't no manners at all in that race;
Each fer his ownself, an' old Nick fer th' last.
A feller got killed, but no odds,—he wus passed.

Bet they won't act that way

At th' Jedgment day,

In makin' th' run from Orlando—

That graveyard old town of Orlando.

Well, lo and behold! when we gets within sight,
Th' town plot o' Perry wus blacker than night,
With "sooners" who sprung as if from th' ground;
There wusn't enough lots to go half-way around;

An' some soldiers wus there,

Jest to make it look fair:

But I wished I'd stayed back at Orlando—

That there desolate town of Orlando.

I thought I was heeled in block forty-one,
'Till a chap showed up with a Winchester gun,
Suggestin' emphatic fer me to vamoose,—
Which same I did prompt before he turned loose ;

I was brought up perlite —

So I bids him "good-night,"

An' I took th' next train fer Orlando —
To that "Queen o' th' Plains" called Orlando.

Th' fellers what run fer to git 'em a claim,
They fared purty much, I reckon, th' same ;
Th' grass wus all burned, an' the creeks wus all dry,
An' old Borees, he got on a terrible high,

An' th' way folks lit out

Wus more like a rout

Than *you'll* ever see in Orlando —

In ten thousand years at Orlando.

It wus the first openin' I ever wus at ;
I lost a month's time, my coat an' my hat ;
I stoved up a horse, an' killed my best mule,
An' went home a-feelin' jest like a darned fool.

So, don't give me no lip

On that Cherokee Strip,

An' I'll let up on Orlando —

That dirty red town of Orlando.

Still, I wants to inquire, before I leaves you,
If you don't jest think old Kansas 'll do
About th' square thing by them as stays by
An' don't jump th' game? I do,— an' fer why?

Well, mainly because

We make our own laws —

Raise more corn an' less hell than Orlando,
Or that whole blessed Strip near Orlando.

Christmas on the Huerfano.

[Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly.]

A SPUR of the Sangre de Christo range of the Rocky Mountains, pushing out into a sea of undulating plains to the southeastward, terminates in a bold promontory, like a mighty fortress, frowning and forbidding. Near by is the energetic little mountain stream known as the Huerfano. The scanty tide of ranchmen on the Huerfano had gradually pushed its way from the foothills into the mountains, where it met the human current from the mines, so that the civilization in the vicinity was made up partly of cowboys and partly of miners.

The pale-blue haziness which in summer hangs over the distant mountains, robing them in a soft drapery of azure, has vanished. Instead there is a pure garment of white, which scintillates brilliantly in the bright glare of the noonday sun like the bespangled robe of some fabled fairy queen. The range now stands out boldly against the horizon, its irregular curves sharply defined as the lines of a cameo; for it is winter, and the day before Christmas.

The road along the river appears to dip as it proceeds, and the traveler experiences that illusion common to mountain regions, of water running upstream. White, ashy adobe dust rises in a cloud, enveloping the solitary horseman, whose Mexican spurs jingle musically and intermittingly with each recurring bound of his bronco.

In an hour's ride the topography has not changed. The air is crisp. There is the clear ring of silver in the occa-



THE DEATH OF FANNIE.

sional whoop of the horseman, who ever and anon appears to question his very existence; or perhaps it is to make sure that the all-pervading silence has not deprived him of speech. He puts his hand first in his overcoat pocket, then on the pack tied behind his saddle, as if to make sure of his treasures. And so he gallops on and on.

“Wonder how Fan will take to her Christmas gifts? Reckon this one in my overcoat pocket will be a mighty big surprise. I’m sure she loves me, or she never would ‘a’ left ‘Boston,’ with his scads o’ money, for a poor cowboy like me. Well, I’m goin’ to act white with her; I don’t care if at the last great round-up I’m branded a maverick and sent below. I ’most wish I’d bought her that diamond ring—seems as though there’s more sentiment in a ring than in black silk. The pert little miss in the store cinched me tight when she said, ‘A black silk is always an acceptable present.’ Hang it! I ought to have taken the ring, too, if I did go broke. Well, I can’t go back to town now. Won’t Fan look sweet in black, with just a dash of red at her throat! I imagine I see her openin’ the packages. How she’ll throw her plump, firm arms round my neck! Gracious!”

Here he involuntarily struck his spurs into the bronco, causing him to redouble his pace. Then, as the little animal settled to his former gait, the cowboy resumed his musings:

“’Tain’t no use talkin’, I can’t take her back to my people in the States, though she’s prettier than any of the old girls at home. In fact, they couldn’t hold a candle to her for winsomeness; they wouldn’t be in it at all. How Fan could lariat those Eastern chumps! Ha! Ha! But

what would mother say if she knew what I'm doing? Well, Colorado is good enough for me as long as Fan is true, and I can't doubt the dear girl any more."

The tedious afternoon had worn away. The white smoke was curling up through the lengthening shadows of the mountain when the bronco's splashing hoofs in the little stream were heard by the dogs that kept watch at the ranch. A sharp turn in the road around a great boulder, and the log-house home greeted the traveler's eye. Two barking dogs jumped at the bronco's nose affectionately. The rider dismounted, and, removing the saddle, threw it over the pack, and went into the cabin.

The front room, though scantily furnished, was tidy, and showed a woman's care. In the corner was a bed with snowy-white counterpane and smoothed pillows. A small curtained window at the left of the door furnished light for the apartment. Near the window a gilt wire cage depended from the ceiling. "Dick," the pet canary, was perched with his head under his wing. In one end of the room a large fireplace with half-burned sticks blazed cheerfully. Above the rude mantel, suspended by straps, was a Winchester rifle; in front of the fire, a huge brown bearskin.

Bronco Bill wondered where Fannie might be; certainly she had not gone far — perhaps to the spring for water. He wearily threw himself on the bearskin, and gazed at the fire. Ah, this was home! True, there was not the prattle of children, but Dick made sweet music. Bill could not call Fannie wife, yet no woman could be tenderer or a neater housekeeper. He contrasted the old days of loneliness, when first he tried to find consolation in

solitude from the fancied wrong of his father, who had driven him from home by a sharp rebuke for his failure to pass examination at college. Then, he was slight in stature, and "Willie Somers"; now, three years later, he is stout, sunburned and bearded, and "Bronco Bill."

"This is deuced queer! Fan! Fannie!" he called. There was no answer. Nero licked his master's hand, looking into his face wistfully. Bill went into the other room — the kitchen and dining-room combined. The table was set, and a chair leaned up at the single plate.

"Hello! what's this?"

With startled eyes, he hastily read:

DECEMBER 24TH.

"MY DARLING OLD ——? What shall I call you, dearest? The name I *would* write you have not given me the right to use. Oh, if I only knew that sometime you would own me before the world as your little wife, my life would be full, my happiness complete! But you will not, you cannot; I know you cannot, for you have told me you intend to go back to your mother when your father should die. You must not disgrace her. I dare not ask you to do that. I know what that is. You are right, dearest. You deserve a good wife, and you will find her. God will reward you; I know He will. How I envy her!

"Now, I must tell you something. While you were gone to town a letter came in a mourning envelope addressed in your mother's hand. My curiosity made me open it. Forgive me, dear; I could not help it, for I felt that it meant separation from you. You will find it in the right-hand pigeonhole, the one under the clock you gave me last Christmas. I will not prolong this. I should like to wear

a black dress, with the red ribbon, the one you liked best, and sleep under the pine where we spent so many happy hours together. Oh, I must hurry! I fear you will be here soon. A last long, passionate kiss and God's blessing. O God forgive me, a poor *wicked* sinner! Please let me be, just this once,

Your own FANNIE.

"P. S.—Be kind to little 'Dick' for my sake. There is no one to notify. I have a mother, but she does not *know*.

"FANNIE."

When Bill Somers reeled into the other room he found two neighbors who had called to accompany Fannie and himself to the Christmas-eve dance. He threw the letter to them and stood transfixed before them. Then, as they began to read, he snatched it away.

"Find her! Go quick; she may not have done it yet. Quick! for God's sake get a move on you; she's goin' to kill herself. O God, save her, my poor Fannie!"

The little searching party hurried out. Snow had begun falling; the night was dark. It would be a miracle to find her. Nero followed in their footsteps, and whined portentously. At twelve o'clock the searchers returned to report, as previously agreed. No trace had been found of the missing woman. Meantime a party from Johnson's, where the dance was being held, had ridden over to find out why "Mr. Somers and lady" had not come, for they were always to be relied on at such festivities.

The men were standing in the room discussing the situation. As is usual at such times, each had a theory to advance.

"Has she took a revolver?" asked one of the men, with an air of superior sagacity becoming to one accustomed to

ferreting out crime. "That's the fust thing to fix, because if she was goin' to make shift with a rope she'd go to the corral, it's likely; an' if she didn't, an' didn't go the revolver route, then she's in the creek, an' you might as well go on with the shindy till daylight."

The suggestion caused Bill to go at once to the bureau.

"It's gone! She had a 38 Smith & Wesson, which she always kept there, loaded," said he. "Why, what's this?" added Bill, who had been stroking Nero's head. "Blood!"

"That dog knows where she is!" cried a chorus of voices.

"Nero was here when I came home, an' he's been with me ever since," said Bill.

"Then she can't be fur, that's sartin shore," put in old Hardridge. "I've heer'n on 'em tell how a dog will go straight to 'em, ef yer jist let 'em go accordin'."

The party went outside.

"I wonder if they looked under the pine tree where the little bench is!" said Bill, as he started in that direction. It was but a short distance.

When Bill reached the tree Nero was already there, whining beside the lifeless body whose little white hand held in its clutch the cruel revolver.

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The next day a young itinerant minister arrived late, having ridden twenty miles in answer to the summons. The little cabin was filled to overflowing with miners and cowboys. There was a sprinkling of women, two of whom had made a burial-robe out of material from the package under the saddle. At poor Fannie's throat was the little red ribbon.

The minister read from the Twenty-third Psalm, and made some feeling remarks, taking the text, "Let him that is without sin among you first cast a stone." He spoke of the sadness of the occasion, briefly referred to the life of the deceased — to its brighter side — to her love of home and its pets, her sunny smile, her helpfulness to others.

"In the presence of death," said he, "on this peaceful Christmas afternoon, while the bells of all Christendom are ringing out with joy, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good-will to men,' let us be honest with ourselves. The deceased may have erred — as who of us has not? Yet, who can say that she will not, somewhere and somehow, be permitted to make it right? Who can believe that an infinitely good, merciful and all-powerful Father will permit the music of heaven to have as an echo the far-off discord of hell?"

When the minister closed there were tears in the eyes of men unused to weep.

Bronco Bill sat motionless with grief, his eyes riveted on the plain pine coffin. Just before the lid was fastened down, with trembling fingers he placed in the cold folded hands of the dead woman an envelope — the one he had brought in his overcoat from town, containing a *marriage license*; then, as he took his agonizing leave, those nearest heard him sob, "Fannie — wife!"

“Heap Big Injun.”

[Mail and Breeze.]

THE American Indian seldom presents the sleek, well-fed appearance of an aldermanic Anglo-Saxon, nor do the lineaments of his glum countenance betoken that mild form of mental stupidity that comes of excessive beer-drinking; he is usually muscular and sinewy, but not often corpulent.

Probably the biggest Indian that ever roamed the western plains was Abraham Burnett, for many years and at the time of his death, June 14, 1870, an hereditary chief of the Pottawatomie nation. He is reported to have weighed, shortly before his death, the enormous amount of 446 pounds.

In early life Chief Burnett attended the mission school conducted by the Rev. Isaac McCoy, a Baptist missionary, at Carey, on the St. Joseph river, in Michigan. Later he was a pupil in a seminary at Bearswallow, Kentucky, an institution established under the supervision of Hon. Richard M. Johnson, who was afterward a Vice-President of the United States.

In the treaty of 1821, concluded at Chicago, between the United States of America, party of the first part, and the Pottawatomie nation, party of the second part, Abraham Burnett's name appears as the beneficiary of a section of land by reason of his being the child of Kaw-kee-me, a sister of the principal chief of the party of the second part; and shortly after that, Chicago and Abraham entered



ABRAHAM BURNETT.

the race for sweepstakes in things big, with the latter somewhat in the lead. Perhaps because he had little confidence in the pretensions of Chicago, Abraham soon left there and settled in Indiana, where he remained till 1848, when he removed with his tribe to their new reservation near the present site of Topeka, Kansas.

About five miles southwest of Topeka and a little south of the Shunganunga creek is a natural mound, that rises considerably above the surrounding country, and near its base Chief Burnett made his home for a great many years. From there he often drove into town in a spring wagon drawn by two ponies, and is said never to have missed seeing any circus that came to the capital of Kansas,—a record of which he was duly proud.

Unfortunately, Abraham had an Indian's fondness for fire-water.” He held to the current belief of his kind, that some whiskies are better than others, yet the poorest brand is better than none at all. Intoxicants percolating through his great system—irrigating many parched places—affected him in a curious way. The lachrymal glands were first to be aroused, and so, the stolid and stoical chief who came into town sober often went out weeping profusely, the quantity of tears being more or less accurately gauged by the number of his indulgences. If he happened to lose the use of his legs, the task of his loading was accomplished by placing him on the lower end of an inclined plane of strong boards, which were then raised till the huge body slid along and down into the wagon in much the same manner that a barrel of salt does.

When intoxicated Chief Burnett's reception by his

squaw (a white woman of German nativity) was often a matter of some concern to him. He would toss his hat in at an open window, and if it came back promptly he prudently remained outside for the night; but if it remained in, he then understood that the relations were not so strained as to make it unsafe for him to enter.

His appetite and capacity for food were amazing. He would bisect a pancake, then double it and stow it away; and, repeating the operation with the remaining half, after two mouthfuls he was ready for another cake. Twenty cakes were not too many for his frugal breakfast.

Mentally, he was, for an Indian, a remarkable man. Though a "constant reader" of the newspapers, he never contributed articles to the press under that head or any other. He was also quite fond of dancing, and was reputed to be graceful for one of his size.

The ordinary Indian concerns himself but little on account of his toilet. He has a passion for gewgaws and brilliant colors that is often his financial undoing, but he is not particular as to the style or fit of his scant apparel,—often designed more to attract the eye than to cover nakedness; and so, his untutored mind sometimes clothes him up before and leaves him bare behind. Burnett never dressed conspicuously. He early discarded the blanket for "hand-me-downs." While there was often a good deal of "slack" in the legs of his trousers, there was never any in the waistband, for he was a man of exceedingly broad and well-cushioned surfaces. Indeed, when he sat on the seat of his wagon he so completely filled it that his wife had to take a back seat,—just as some poor wives of the white man have to do, but for a different reason. If, per-

chance, he fell asleep on the seat, his head would roll about on his great shoulders, but the body was as stable as a huge sack of corn-meal.

Abraham Burnett drew his annuity from the Government with the rigorous punctuality of a member of Congress, and spent it in much the same way that such an official does, for, in the simple philosophy of the Indian, money is good for nothing save to spend.

The subject of this sketch is said to have been a kind husband, an indulgent father to the several papooses that blessed his fireside, and, withal, peaceable and unostentatious. Toward strangers his demeanor was that of dignified reserve, but with his intimate associates he was communicative, and even cordial.

Out on the banks of the winding Shunganunga, and near the base of the knoll that bears his name, the tall and luxuriant prairie-grasses now wave above the unmarked and lonely grave of this one-time powerful chief, who achieved, in one sense at least, the proud distinction of being, to use the language of his people, a “Heap Big Injun.”

A fable of the Desert.

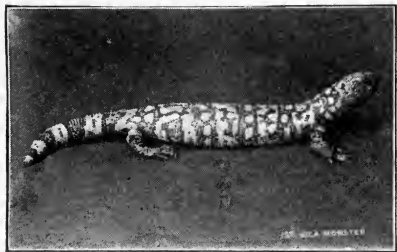
“JUST Listen to This,” said the Gila Monster, Reading from a Paper which a Prospector had Dropped in the dusty Path:

TO THE DESERT.

Eternal silence reigns. Is this the peace
 That toiling man so fretful seeks in vain?
 The sweet oblivion for soul and brain?
 Is immortality the mind's caprice?—
 A baseless hope? And do our woes increase
 Till beauty fades, and life, like thee, appears
 A dreary blank? Perhaps; and yet the years
 Spent here prepare us for the soul's release.

Oh, dreary waste, the long years like a day
 O'er thee roll on. The starlit dome above
 Looks pitilessly down, while not a breath
 Bestirs the leafless, barren, sun-scorched way
 The stealthy coyote treads. No joy, nor love,
 Nor hope, ah me! seems here; yet death—sweet death!

“Now, don't that Jar you?” continued the Gila Monster, adding, “Did you ever in all your Life hear such Rot?”



GILA MONSTER.

“It's worse than that. It's positively Libelous,” said the Lizard, wagging his Tail and his Tongue simultaneously. “I'm in

favor of Holding an indignation Meeting at once, and Burning the Author in Effigy if we can find dead Cacti

enough for a Bonfire. You keep the Paper and I'll Run over to the Neighbors and Get them here in a Jiffy."

And he Scurried about the Rocks, here and there, like a Busybody with a fresh Gossip to retail.

Presently the entire Community had gathered together, and the Gila Monster, having been called upon to Preside, read aloud the Sonnet, and called for an Expression of Opinion upon it.

"I don't Profess to Know much about Poetry," spoke up the Rattlesnake. "It may be a fairly good



WHERE THEY GATHERED.

Sonnet, as Sonnets go, but its Tone is too Pessimistic, and It is a gross Libel of the Facts. If my Hearing served me Right, it says 'No Joy' is Here. I'd like to Know what



NOT A POET.

the Poet would call Joy. I have Done Nothing all Day but Bask in the warm Sun, except once when I saw our common Enemy, Man, coming. When he Passed me I lifted up my Tail and gave a Rattle that Made him look round and his Horse to Shy sideways. No Joy! Ha, ha, he, he!" And

he Squirmed and Wiggled with Delight as he recalled the Sport of the Day.

"What was that it said about a 'Dreary Waste'?" asked the Roadrunner, flapping her Wings and taking a flying Circle round the Group.

"It says:

"'Oh, dreary waste, the long years like a day o'er thee roll on!'"

And the Monster read again from the scrap of newspaper.

"Well," replied the Roadrunner, scratching her Head with one toe of her long Foot, "that's not half Bad. Time goes so fast with me that a Year often seems like a Day. But, sir, how can anyone have the bad Taste to say this beautiful Country is *Dreary*? It's what is called Poetic License, I suppose. The bald Fact is,



MRS. ROADRUNNER.

we have Nothing but Sunshine. Talk about *dreary* Places: the last Time I made an excursion down to the Pacific I found Nothing but Rain and Fog. You folks that stay at Home here, year in and year out, don't Know what the Word *dreary* Means! If you did, you'd Resent this Piece of Impertinence. I see Mr. Prairie-Dog coming down the Path. He can tell you, for He is just now in Search of a new Location."

"Mr. Chairman," said the Prairie-Dog, sitting down and Removing a Bur from his left front Foot, "I'm a Pilgrim, and I'm a Stranger in your beautiful Land, having just come down by Foot from Apache County to spy out for my People a new Home—a Place where we can have more Freedom and less Water."

The Gila Monster, seeing that the new Arrival did not Understand the Objects of the Meeting, read again the Sonnet, and then called for the further Pleasure of the Meeting.

All eyes were now turned in the Direction of the Prairie-Dog, who, after Stroking his gray Mustaches, began:

"He's a nice One to talk about 'Leafless' things. If I Remember aright, the Poet's early Ancestors prided themselves on their leafless Condition, and it was only after their Fall from Grace that they Betook themselves to leaves—fig leaves! If they'd Lived in this warm Country there would never have been such a Thing in the World as Original Sin. I thank you for the Honor Conferred upon me, Mr. Chairman, and I yield the Floor to abler Ones than I."

And he sat Down and pulled out another Bur with His two front Teeth.

“Mr. Chairman,” shrieked the Coyote in a shrill tenor, and holding up one Paw to Attract the Attention of the Presiding Officer, “Mr. Chairman, I’m not the one to bark or yell Himself hoarse for bein’ called Names. I’m used to It. You all Know that I’ve been Called most Everything that the Ingenuity of heartless Man can Devise for sneakin’ Meanness! ‘Stealthy’ is not half as Bad as I usually Get. One noted Poet called me an ‘Outcast,’ and a western Writer of some Reputation said this: ‘He is Universally conceded to be a Sneak, a Thief, and an arrant Coward. He is a worthless Vagabond; a Wanderer o’ Nights and a Lier-by by Day; a dissipated Wretch in whose whole History there is no Redeeming fact. He has an extensive Connection but no Family. He is disowned by the Dogs and not Recognized at all by respectable Foxes.’ So, Mr. Chairman, if that’s all this Fuss is about I’ll be going.” And he tucked his gray Tail between his hind Legs and started off.

“Hold on, sir,” cried the Chairman. “While you would eschew the Subject, you may Get a square Meal out of this Paper, if you’ll only be Patient, for I Observe that it has been Wrapped round a piece of Bacon.”

At this piece of Information the hasty Coyote pricked up his sharp ears and Shied round behind the Chairman and looked longingly at the Grease-spot, and said that he would Change his Mind, and that there was really no Hurry at all about his Going. It was only a Bluff on his Part, as everybody Present knew. Then he Tried to Snatch away the Paper, but the Chair was Onto him, and folded it up and put it under a Paper-weight,—one of his four legs,—and the rude Coyote then sat Himself down at a respectful Distance and Waited.

"I wish to say," said the Chairman, still keeping one foot on the Paper and an eye on the Coyote," that, once upon a Time, I suffered the great Misfortune to be Captured by a Man, and was taken a long Distance from Home and put in a Drug-store Window for Men to look at; and so, I flatter Myself that I have had unusual Opportunities for Observing how Things are Done in the outside World. While I was there I lived in a glass House —"

"Shouldn't throw Stones, then," interrupted the Road-runner, making a Dive in the direction of the Centipede, who bethought Himself to Crawl into a Crack.

"Sit down and Fold your Wings!" shouted the Chairman, resuming his Narrative. "And if you, my Friends, could see the Stuff these poor People live on — nasty, bad-smelling Stuff kept in rows of Bottles — you'd never Object again to the Smell of my Breath, and you'd be Content and never Find any more Fault with your Lot here the longest Day of your Life. They have some queer Notions. For instance, I one Day overheard a Man say, in Speaking of us and what we Eat, that down here Everything, animals and Vegetation alike, was armed by Nature with pricklers for Protection against everything else. 'Well, why not?' I thought. It saves Keeping up a big standing Army. And I don't mind saying that I would have liked that glass House better if it had had a rough Edge or two in it so that I could have Scratched my Back. My Friends, you don't half Appreciate the Luxuries you have here. Suppose that you had to Crawl out and build a Fire every Morning! — but I have Digressed."

"What does that word Love mean? You remember the Line reading, 'No love, ah me! seems here,' etc.?" asked the Tarantula, addressing the Chair.

"It's a Word they use a great Deal. I don't Know that I can Define it; but when a Man says he Loves you, he Means that he doesn't Intend to Kill you just then — wants to Make some further use of you," answered the Chair, blinking.

"Keep you to Eat to-morrow?" suggested the Taran-tula.

"Well, something like that. I heard a good Deal about Love, for it was Preached sometimes in a Church near by, and the Windows were open and I could Hear what was said; but I didn't See enough of It in daily Use to tell exactly what It was like. Probably the Poet is Right in saying that there is no Love here. But why should there be? When you once Begin to look Out for the other Fellow's welfare, he becomes Idle and Shiftless. Individualism is Vastly better for Society, I guess. Let every one Rustle for himself." And he swallowed a Fly that had lit upon his Nose.

"It is true," observed the Prairie-Dog, stroking his Whiskers and seeking to Bring the Discussion back to its Legitimate sphere, "that it's pretty hard to get about in this Country,—that is, for a Tenderfoot like me,—and Water is Scarce; but nevertheless, it is the best Place on Earth. Suppose you lived in a cold Country and were half Frozen to Death for six Months out of the Year, or when it Rained, your House was Flooded,—wouldn't you then Wish you were Here, where, as the Poet says:

"The starlit dome looks pitilessly down ' ?

You can Bet your sweet Life you would." And he tipped a wink to the Rattlesnake, who took the floor, and said:

"Speaking for myself, I can say that I wouldn't Give

a rod of 'Barren, Sun-scorched Way' for a quarter-section of ice-covered Land."

"My Friends," said the Chairman, "I agree with the last speaker, to whom I am, I suppose, a half-cousin; this country suits me to a 'T.' I have no notion of Emigrating. I'm too lazy, for one thing, to get out and hustle in a cold and cheerless World when there's no use of It."

"Mr. Chairman," said the Coyote, not rising from his haunches, "I see in our Midst an aged Stranger whose Presence I have Noted with more than passing Interest. From his Appearance I should Judge that he is a Person who has Traveled extensively and is much Given to Reflection upon the serious Problems of Life. His sage Advice would Doubtless be of great Value to us at this Time. I may also be Permitted to add that, believing as I do in Welcoming the Stranger within our Gates, so to Speak, I took it upon Myself last Night to Serenade him; but, as the Hour was late and he had Retired, I got no Response. I move you, Sir, that the Privileges of the Floor be now Extended to him — our distinguished Guest — the Honorable Mister Burro, late of the Territory of New Mexico."

"Mr. Chairman and Fellow-Citizens," began the Burro slowly, with one ear to the Ground and the Other extended in the Direction of the Presiding Officer: "It is True that I am a Stranger among you, and it is very Good of you to Invite me to Meet with you and Participate in your Deliberations. I beg to Assure you that I Appreciate the high Compliment."

"I am not Given, Mr. Chairman and Fellow-Citizens, to vain-glorious Boasting. I take no especial Pride in my

Ancestry, and I concern myself but little about my Posterity. I leave these Things to persons who Care more for Genealogy. I may Say, however, without Affectation, that I was Born of poor but honest Parents. I am Aware that I have a Dejected and Discouraged Cast of Countenance, but, my Friends, please Consider for a Moment my sad Experiences. For many Centuries my unfortunate People have patiently and submissively Endured the 'Slings and Arrows of outrageous Fortune' — have been the abject Slaves of that greatest of Tyrants, Man! Is it any wonder that I have a woe-begone Look? Is it not more Surprising that, with it all, I have kept my native Innocence? My friends, Look into my large Ox-like Eyes and say whether I Speak not the Truth? And now, in mine old Age, I am cruelly Turned out to — to — Dry up and Blow away, and I have come down Here because I Wot that this is a goodly Land to Die in — ”

“None better,” interrupted the Coyote, wistfully, his red Tongue lolling from his hungry Mouth. “You have Shown very good Judgment, Stranger, and we Welcome you to our Midst now, and we will take great Pleasure in Dancing at your Funeral later. We promise you, Sir, that you shall not Blow away. About — er — about how Long do you think it will — ”

“Mr. Coyote, you are out of Order!” shouted the Chairman.

“I'm not either — never in better Order,” snapped the Coyote, taking his Seat.

“You will Proceed, Mr. Burro. You have the Floor,” said the Chairman encouragingly.

“I was about to Say,” resumed the Burro, “that in all my Wanderings I have nowhere Received such a touchingly



THE BURRO.

royal Welcome as here. It does my Ears good to Hear such unselfish Expressions. I have been brutally Thwacked over the Head by Man for many long and weary Years, although all the Time I uncomplainingly Carried for him the great loads he has Heaped upon my poor Back

—Loads that Made me to Stagger as one Drunk with Wine. Sometimes, too, he would himself Get on my Back when I was already Overburdened. And what did I Receive in Return? A few Gunny-sacks and Tin Cans, Garnished sometimes with old Socks and discarded Boots, if, perchance, I could Find them in the back Yard. I ask you, was there ever such base Ingratitude?

“But I will not Detain you longer with Things so Personal. Coming now to the Question before the House, I Wish, Mr. Chairman, to Congratulate you upon Having such an unattractive Country — that is, of course, from the Commercial point of View of Man. Were it Otherwise, Man’s Avarice would have Led him long since to Assert his imperial Policy among you, and you would All have been Subjugated and Deprived of your Freedom. These Americans Profess to Believe that we are Endowed by the Creator with certain inalienable Rights, among which are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness, and that to Secure those Rights Governments are Instituted, Deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed. A very pretty Doctrine; but have a Care, for I Warn you that it is not Necessary that that Consent should be

Voluntary. You must Yield to Man's Rule whether you so Wish or not. That is the Law of Civilization. Do I Talk like an Ass? Well, you'll see!"

Here there was an Outburst of Applause, and the Burro wiped the Perspiration from his Brow, although it was not what would be Called a hot Day, for the Thermometer Registered only 129° Fahrenheit.

"In time, I Predict that Man's sway will Reach you, even Here: Railroads will Come; Dams will be Built; Water Impounded in vast Reservoirs off in the distant Mountains; Ditches will be Dug; this Desert will be Made to 'Bloom and Blossom as the Rose.' Then, Fellow-Citizens, where will Be your boasted Liberties? Echo Answers. My Friends, I Give you timely Warning. If you Love your happy Homes, be Vigilant. That is the Price of Liberty and the Paramount Issue. I need hardly Assure you that I am of the common Herd, and that my Democracy has never been Doubted!

"As to that so-called Sonnet which has Brought you together, I have simply to Say that I pay more Attention to Reason than to Rhyme. I am not a Poet. I am a Philosopher!

"Thanking you for your Attention, Mr. Chairman, I have Done!"

The Burro seemed to have Caught his Audience. Seldom had so stirring a Speech been Heard, and his Hearers were now thoroughly Roused to a high Pitch of Enthusiasm. Had the poor Poet been Present, his very Life would, perhaps, have been in great Peril.

"Mr. Chairman! Mr. C-h-a-i-r-m-a-n!" squeaked a small voice from a near-by pile of Rocks. "I am, perhaps, the smallest Toad in the Puddle, if I may be permitted



HORNED TOAD.

to use a simile foreign to these Parts. Sir, I am nothing but a Horned Toad, and I Spend most of my Time, as you Know, in diligently Sitting still on a Rock—an Occupation I have been Engaged in so Long that I have come so closely to Resemble a Rock that you and the rest of our Friends here often Pass me by without Noticing me.

“It ill becomes so humble a Citizen to Criticise the Speech of others, and I shall not do so on this auspicious

Occasion. I want to Say, however, that I never Appreciated my God-given Liberty so much as I have since the Time I Escaped from a Bottle in which this Monster, Man, Incarcerated me for sixty Days without Food or Drink. I am used to Fasting, but I seriously Object to having Others tell me when I shall Do it. I’d rather—far rather—Jump the Game!”

“Mr. Chairman! M-i-s-t-e-r Chairman!” screeched the Roadrunner, standing on tiptoe and Flapping her Wings Excitedly.

“Sit down, you Nervous, Long-legged Fly-away! The Button was Pressed by Mr. Rattlesnake, and the Chair will Do the Rest. It recognizes him,” hissed the Monster rather Curtly.

“You’re a great, big, Constipated Chunk—a—a

cross between a Snake and a Lizard! No one Likes you — you Green and Yellow spotted old Good-for-nothing!” replied the Roadrunner saucily, having little Regard to Parliamentary Usage.

“And nobody Likes you — you Gad-about!” retorted the Chairman, at the same Time nodding to the Rattlesnake to Proceed with his Argument.

“Whatever we may Think of a Man whose Heel is Forever Crushing those of us he Finds in his Way,” said the Rattlesnake, “there are some Evils right here at Home that need Reforming. I’d rather belong to a Home than a Foreign Missionary Society any Day in the Week. You, who Know me best, Know that I believe in fair Play. I always Give timely Warning of an Attack. Now I Think it’s a mean Advantage to Take of a Fellow, when he’s asleep, to Run a Ring of dead Cactus round him,” and he looked Sharply at the Roadrunner, so that All present Knew to whom his Remarks referred.

“We must have no more Personalities,” cautioned the Chairman, trying to Look Wise as should Become one in his Position.

“In stringing Cactus round you!” exclaimed the Roadrunner, shrilly, “I only Use the Wits my Maker Endowed me with for my own Preservation,—it’s the first Law of Nature. It’s one Way I have of Getting my daily Meat!”

“There you Go again! This is an Indignation Meeting, and if you Get to Shooting off your Impudent Mouth I fear we shall not Accomplish much for the good of the Order! Let us have Peace, Friends. If there are any more Unseemly Interruptions, the Chair will exercise the Prerogative of his Position and Adjourn the Meeting,”

admonished the Monster; adding, "Mr. Centipede, what is it?"

"I rise to my feet to put a Motion; but before Doing so I wish to Make a few feeble Remarks, and to say that I Claim to be as Loyal a Citizen of the Desert as any Beast that Walks, and when you Consider the Number of my Legs, it must be Apparent that I, Sir, do about as much Walking for the Distance covered as the next One. But for all that I am not Disposed to go Back on or to Leave my Happy Home for —"

[Cries of "Hear! Hear!" The Chairman bites off a piece of the Lizard's tail.]

"As I was about to Remark, Mr. Chairman, it all Depends upon One's point of View. From the Standpoint of the Poet, he is Right; from our Standpoint, he is Wrong. Let us be Just! I'd rather be Right than *you*, Mr. Chairman!"

[Cries of "What's the Matter with the Centipede?" "He's all Right!" "Hit Him Again," etc.]

"Come on with your Motion!" shouted the Chairman savagely, for he was Stung to the Quick by the Centipede's Thrust.

The Centipede then Offered the Following Resolution and moved its Unanimous Adoption:

"*Resolved*, That we, the Inhabitants of the Great Sandy Desert, in Mass Meeting Assembled, Recognizing as we Do, that we are no small Part of a great integral Whole, and Felicitating Ourselves and our Children upon our happy and prosperous Condition, do, without Waiting for the Aid and Consent of any other Section (that has no Vote), Denounce and Deplore those Efforts of certain Self-appointed Critics and so-called Poets to Belittle us in the Eyes of the World; and we Appeal to our Fellows to Resent as Unpatriotic and Un-American and Unworthy of all Creation the

Sentiments Contained in an Article entitled 'To the Desert' as published in *The Scorchers*. We Invoke the Time-honored Doctrine, dear to the Hearts of every Denizen of this Desert, the sacred Right of Getting up on our hind Legs and Howling whenever Things are Suspected of going Wrong. We Concede to Others this God-given Right; we Demand it for ourselves. When it is Denied, then shall all Conventions Perish from the Face of the Earth, and the great American Privilege of Kicking be at an End!"

When the Lizard, who was acting as Secretary, had finished Reading the Resolution, there was howling Enthusiasm, and Everything was at a white Heat. More Speech-making followed. The Rattlesnake Declared that this was the best Country he had ever Done Business in, and that the Resolution was Rattling good as far as it Went, but it Did not go far enough—did not Contain *venom* enough to suit him. A belated Delegate, the Black Skunk, was very Vindictive and Sarcastic, and characterized the Resolution as too Sweet-scented. It seemed as though Everybody was on his Feet and trying to Get the Ear of the Chairman. All was Excitement. It was quite evident that Trouble was Brewing.

At this Juncture, the Prairie-Dog Whispered Something into the Ear of the Burro, and they quietly Withdrew, and when they were at a safe Distance the Former said to the Latter, "I have often Observed, Friend, that when a Family Row is On, it is the Part of Prudence for Strangers to Depart."

"I am not Disposed to Question your Wisdom," replied the Burro, adding: "By the Way, is it not Oppressively Hot here to-day? I would Give my Kingdom for a Drink of Water. O! What an old Fool I am! If I could only be back in God's Country!" And he Burst into Tears.

The Prairie-Dog Smiled at the sad Plight of his old Friend, and said:

“Friend, you should have shed your wool Coat when you came through Hell’s Cañon. As for Water, you should not Expect to Find that in Hell!”

“Is this then the Country I have been Told so often to Go to?” asked the Burro.

“No,” answered the Prairie-Dog, “but it is next Door to it, and you will See it very soon.”

“These folk seem very well Satisfied with their Surroundings,” observed the Burro, thoughtfully.

“So they are,” replied the Prairie-Dog, “and it is well that such is the Case, for nobody Else Wants the blasted Country. You Remember the old Saying, ‘Where Ignorance is Bliss,’ etc. But Keep still! Hark!”

The Chairman was Speaking.

“Before Adjourning,” said he, “the Chair wishes to Congratulate the Party upon the entire Harmony that has Prevailed here to-day. Nothing has Occurred to Mar the Proceedings, and we are United as never before in our History, and —”

But he did not Conclude, for the Rattlesnake had his poisonous Fangs deep into the poor Coyote’s Leg, and the Latter had a Mouthful of the Roadrunner’s feathers, and the Roadrunner had seized the poor Tarantula and was Flying off with him, and Dangling from one Foot of the Tarantula was the poor Centipede, Head downward, while the Black Skunk was Dancing threateningly before the Chairman in a Frenzy of Excitement, shrieking, “*I’m Left! I’m Left!*”

“I Declare this Meeting Adjourned, *sine die!*” ex-

claimed the Gila Monster, turning to the Lizard, who had just Discovered the Loss of his Tail, and was Lamenting. "It was a glorious Meeting, wasn't it?" he asked.

"I liked the Way it Started out—the Unselfish Patriotism Manifested—but I can't Say that I entirely Approved of its Boisterous Ending; not that I Care for a couple of Inches of my Tail, for that will Grow out again, I Presume!"

"Who called the Meeting?" demanded the Gila Monster.

"I Did," the Lizard admitted Meekly.

"Well, don't be a Kicker, but Take your Medicine. The World Hates a Bolter," observed the Monster sagely.

"But where Do I come in on the Deal?" queried the Lizard, adding Mournfully: "Everybody seemed to Get Something, except me. I seem to have Got Left!"

"That," remarked the Monster, "often Happens in practical Politics. But you have the Resolutions; you can Frame them—they Read well!" And the Monster started to leave the Platform.

"Hold, a Moment!" called out the Burro, who was now Approaching from the Outskirts of the Meeting-Place; "I am Aware that Postprandial Remarks may not be in Order now, but I wish to Lift up my Voice in Condemnation of certain heathenish Practices which I observe Obtain here. Hot and Dry as it is here, you ought to be a Happy and Contented and Peace-loving folk, for a kind Providence has Supplied your every Want. I am, however, Pained to note a Disposition on the Part of Some to Introduce foreign Methods—Methods unbecoming to People of your Standing. I will be Frank with you. I did not Expect to Find here these high Tenets of Religion and Philosophy

which Teach that Self-sacrifice for the good of Others is best, and, indeed, the true Lesson of Life, but I had Hoped to Find that the Degrading Methods of the Ward Caucus had long since been Discarded! Alas! it was an idle Dream.

“I am Ready now to Cash in!”

Hic docet: (1) Some poetry is not appreciated; (2) Contentment is a good thing, and should be encouraged; (3) Politics is much the same everywhere.

A Kansas Emigrant.

[Rewritten from Mail and Breeze.]

A HORSEMAN had been roaming over the broad unfenced prairies of southern Kansas in search of some cattle that had gone astray, and as he ascended a little hill he caught sight of a "prairie schooner" lazily drifting along in an ocean of grass. Drawing rein, he was soon alongside.

After the usual greetings of "Howdy?" on one side, and "Hello!" on the other, the owner of the queer, lumbering craft caught the horseman's eye wandering over the broad expanse of waving billows upon which there was the shimmer of a September sun, while here and there as far as the eye could reach patches of bright-colored flowers bobbed up and down like gaudily-painted buoys in a sea of green.

"Y-a-a-s," said the mover with a peculiar drawl and a sweep of a long bony hand that protruded some inches beyond a frayed wristband, "Y-a-a-s, she's great, hain't she? Bluestem is awful hard ter beat. I reckon as how God never made nothin' no finer'n bluestem, 'less 'twas a girl baby with blue eyes an' flax hair. Stranger, did yer never take notice thet thar's nothin' in this heah ole world thet's extra gorgeous fine but what's set in blue? What'ud the Stars-and-Stripes be ef 't wasn't fer th' blue fer 'em to shine out in? Why, you're peert enough ter know thet 't would be jest a limp ole rag. Nothin' more! An' jest take notice of them skies, fer instance,—so blue thet you jest looks right up an' up an' into th' pearly

gates themselves! No, siree, blue is all right,—*blue anything!*”

“Blue’s all hunky, is it? Waal, ef yer wants ter see a blue female, yer don’t hev fur ter go,” observed a woman who here craned out her head from the laps of the wagon-cover, disclosing a pinched face that was tanned and prematurely wrinkled.

“Don’t pay no ’tention ter th’ ole woman,” remarked the man, who was evidently her husband. “These heah Kansas folks is great kickers, but I takes notice thet when they goes away they come sneakin’ back agin like a whipped, yaller, egg-suckin’ dog with his tail betwixt his legs. What, Maria?”

“She’s too windy fer me,” feebly protested the woman.

“Hear thet woman palaver! Too windy? No sech a thing,” he contradicted.

“Waal, ef I wus *you*, arter what you’ve been through with th’ wind, I’d shet up tight on thet subject,” piped the woman in treble tones, while some barnyard favorites in the coop at the end of the wagon began to fuss.

The woman’s husband then turned to the horseman and said deprecatingly:

“I kain’t argify none with th’ ole woman on thet pint. She’s wuss’n th’ chickens. She’s mighty nigh plumb locoed on wind; but, my frien’, I can see a heap o’ good in wind, fer it pumps th’ water, makes th’ air good ter suck in, an’ a lot o’ other things, ef yer jest stops ter think twicet. Wimmin only think oncet, an’ sometimes not half then. A man’s got ter put th’ good agin th’ bad, an’ strike an average, or thar hain’t nowhar fit ter live in. An’ ef you do put th’ good again th’ bad, ole Kansas is ’bout as near paradise as they make ’em.”

"Then why are you leaving it?" asked the horseman.

"Thet's a civil question, an' I'll take notice of it presently; but first I'd orter ter say thet my name is Cadwalader; some uses one 'l,' others uses more, jest 'cordin' ter taste. An' your'n? No matter; I'll recommember yer as th' likely feller we met up with whar th' roads forks a-goin' ter Baxter Springs, an' a-ridin' a sorrel with white feet an' a-spavined.

"An' so yer'd like ter know whar this heah ole contraption is bound fer, hey?

"Waal, stranger, I'll jest make free ter tell yer plain. Me an' th' ole woman an' th' kids is a-movin' back ter Arkansaw ter her folks. Thet's what we air. Yer see, we come out heah in th' fust place sorter through false pretenses, as th' lawyers calls it. Th' ole woman hed heered tell thet thar warn't no red licker ter be hed in Kansas, an' so she kinder made up her mind thet ef she could git her ole man out heah she'd hev a great cinch on him. So nothin' 'ud do but ter sell out, an' pack up, an' come on, which we done as I'm a-tellin' o' you.

"Yer see, I hadn't no perticular kick a-comin', bekase I'd heered thet proherbition *didn't* perhibit ter no 'larmin' extent. A saloon-keeper back in Fayetteville hed read ter me out o' a paper which I reckon the whisky fellers hed hed printed an' sent ter him, thet thar wus no end o' free whisky in Kansas. I wus raised up ter b'lieve in th' good ole Democratic notion thet a white man hed th' right ter eat an' drink an' wear what he darn pleased, ef he wus willin' ter pay fer th' same, an' thet them's th' exact words writ in th' Constitution of th' U. S. An' thet's what I mean when I say thet I come out heah under false pretenses.

"Why air we a-goin' back?"

"Now, my frien', I'll tell you jest why. In th' fust place, thar's too much politics an' things a-tryin' ter happen. Th' schools is good enough, I reckon, but then thar hain't no mast fer hogs. But them's not th' main excuses. Yer see, we got swiped — thet's what we did — swiped *bad*. We hadn't no more 'n got settled down comfortable like, thar on th' Ninnescah, till things begun ter go wrong, so thet we hed nothin' much left but distressin' good health.

"Th' swipin' business was this-a-way: One summer's arternoon what should come a-moseyin' 'long over the prairies an' light right down in my paster but one o' them dod-blasted an' double-an'-twisted slycoons, th' which walloped th' fences six ways fer Sunday, an' then gallivanted right on till it reached our ole house, which th' same it tuck, you understan' me, in less 'n a holy minute, an' turned inside out an' wrong side up, an' scattered it along through Harper an' Sumner counties, an' Oklahoma Territory, fer all thet I knows. Reckon 'twould hev lifted th' mortgage too ef it hedn't been held down east!

"*Blow?* Waal, I should ruther insinerate thet it did kinder fan things fer 'bout a minute. 'T wan't no fancy skirt dance, an' thar wusn't no chance ter run nor dodge — jest had ter stan' an' nat'rally take it jest wharever it seed fit ter plant it.

"Say, mister, when we gathered 'twus purty much like an election thet's mostly scatterin'. When Maria's head come out o' th' cellar o' th' milk-house all a-pantin' an' skeered ter death, I said ter her, says I, 'Maria, *now* air yer a-satisfied with yer proherbition Kansas?'

"Then she says kinder meek-like, says she, 'Hez.' — Hezekiah is my full name — 'Hez., yer can hitch up.'

"But, Lor' me, thar warn't no nothin' ter hitch up. Th' ole sorrel wus a-straddle o' a tree, an' a piece o' th' ole gray wus arterwards found in Berry's feed-lot; th' wagon-box wus nowhares, an' th' runnin'-gears was galley-west an' crooked in two townships. Then we looked fer th' chickens, an' thar wus only one pore leetle rooster left, an' him with pride an' feathers clean gone. Then Maria wus ready ter cave.

"But we hed ter stay awhile, you understan', a-collectin' up th' remainin' remnants. Th' kids wus ter school when th' slycoon struck, but they wus all brought in alive an' kickin' 'cept one — pore leetle Hank, who warn't favored 'nough ter stan' no sech a scrimmage.

"An' so, arter the neighbors — they wus good neighbors, no better, bar none — hed helped put leetle Hank away thar by th' stone meetin'-house, an' we'd swapped some o' th' truck fer this ole ox team, we at last got a move on us, an' yer can see fer yer ownself what's left.

"Maria, what does you reckon yer ma'll say ter you when she sees this heah percession o' wreck an' ruin pull up? I'll tell yer what she'll say. She'll say, '*I done tole yer so!*' Yes, she will; an' thet's most th' hardest part o' goin' back.

"But, my frien', I reckon Maria'll be mighty glad ter git back spared o' her life to whar they hev no twisters, an' whar a woman can hang out a washin' without danger o' its bein' blowed into th' naix county.

"Waal, so long! Gee up, Buck!"

The queer old outfit had not gone far down the road

when Cadwallader, wearing the expression of one who had forgotten something, came ambling back to the questioner he had just left. Clearing his throat of its huskiness, and assuring himself that his remarks would not be overheard by his family, he slowly resumed:

“Say, my frien’, I wishes ter tell you all alone, you understan’, thet while I talks thet-away ’bout proherbition, — thet a feller ought ter be free ter do as he has a mind, an’ so on,—I does it jest bekase I don’t like ter own up flat-footed afore *her* thet I’ve been beat by no woman. You see I wus born proud-speereted. Ef thar’s free whisky a-flowin’ out heah, all I’ve got ter say is, an’ I speaks it plain, Cadwallader wusn’t drowned out by it, an’ he can say thet his ole stummick never ’sperienced no sech drought,—no sech a s’prise party you might say,—an’ it’s goin’ on fifty-five year ole, too!

“Now, jest betwixt me an’ you, th’ ole woman an’ th’ kids ’ud ruther — I’m a-thinkin’, ef ~~they~~ ’d talk serious — live in Kansas an’ chance th’ slycoons ’n ter stay back in Arkansaw an’ hev pap drunk purty much all th’ time. I’m blamed ef they wouldn’t. In course, she’s a trifle sore on Kansas jest now, but she’ll git over it. So, I wouldn’t be s’prised ef, mebbe, you’d see us a-movin’ back with th’ grass; an’ so, I wishes you’d obleege me by sorter keepin’ an eye peeled for a place ter rent.

“An’ say, mister, ef it hain’t askin’ too all-fired much, an’ you happens up by the Ninneseah meetin’-house, kinder see ef things is all right with pore leetle Hank’s grave, will

you? You 'll know it by a shingle nailed to a two-by-four, with th' words,

H. CADWALLADER, AGE 7.

writ in red chalk." And he indicated upon the side of the wagon the spelling and the capitalization.

"Gosh!" he resumed, "you don't know how I hates ter leave him behind — seems so pow'ful lonesome-like fer him ter be away out thar in th' bleak, through no fault o' his 'n, an' his kin-folks a-clearin' out. Mebbe it's a fool notion o' Cadwallader's, who never amounted ter no great shucks, so fer as th' world knows, but, sir, th' fac' is th' further he goes away from thar th' bigger th' lump grows in his ole throat."

For awhile the old man stood gazing back toward the western horizon, and across the prairies a gentle wind toyed softly with his beard as a baby's tiny fingers might have done. Evidently his mind was in retrospect. Perhaps he was thinking of the happy days spent on the Kansas farm — of the merry laughter of the rosy-cheeked children as they came trooping home from school, swinging their tin pails and shouting, and stopping at the pond near the feed-lot to skate; of the drumming of the prairie-chicken and the sweet song of the meadow-lark that cheered him each spring while he followed the long, mellow furrows of the fields; of the sleek cattle that chewed their cuds in contentment at the close of the long summer days; of the great ricks of prairie hay and the big piles of white corn that so often delighted his eyes in the fall: in short, of the bright side of Kansas farm-life.

Presently he straightened himself up, the light of a new resolution in his eyes, and said:

"Say, I'll be back naix spring shore, arter we gits

patched up a bit; fer, honest, I'd ruther chance a bein' blowed ter Heaven sober in a Kansas slycoon 'n ter go ter Hell drunk from Arkansaw. *What?*"

And as the movers slowly disappeared over the hill to the eastward, the horseman felt that in the fullness of time they would surely come back, for Kansas had worked her strange spell,—the fascination of a capricious mistress.



At the Bright Angel Trail.



AT THE TRAIL.

THE Bright Angel trail starts up among the Arizona pines, and leads from the south rim of the Grand Cañon down to the Colorado river. It is a narrow path, often twisting and turning round sharp projections of rock from which one can see straight down a sheer

thousand feet, or across to the opposite rim,—perhaps fifteen miles distant. Here, it threads a shelf cut into the very side of a precipitous cliff; there, it winds along a narrow “hogback,” but always and ever descending rapidly toward the river.

Though perfectly safe, in places the trail is so very steep that logs have been anchored into it



AMONG THE ARIZONA PINES.

in such a way as to give a surer footing,—places where a rider must dismount and lead his pony, and cling to the bushes, and brace himself lest he acquire too great a momentum and rush headlong to the depths below.

Step here a moment. It is a place perhaps one-fourth of the way down. Back of us shoots up and up a smooth, perpendicular wall of light yellow rock, and off to the left and away down below, a zigzag line, later to be threaded but which is yet far above that circular mountain of red sandstone standing out by itself like an island against which soft, blue, ethereal waves gently lave themselves. To the right, and miles beyond the river, which is not yet visible, are those wonderful serrated promontories of stratified rocks extending boldly out into a tideless and silent sea. Yonder seems to be a great walled city, rising terrace upon terrace, deserted and sun-beaten, with fluted columns and rounded domes, massive mansards and sharp spires, all fantastically carved and gorgeously colored,—fit dwelling-places for the fabled gods, or a Titanic people of some prehistoric age.

Trut, the guide, had a Polonius-like imagination, and ever and anon he would pause to point out some fantastic creation in rock,—a crouching lion, the Old Woman's Head, or the Mormon Elder's Foot,—and seriously to relate a most improbable story about it. The best way to get the worth of one's money is quietly to drink in a guide's stories without questioning: it pleases him, and it saves much time.

An accomplished liar was Trut, and—but wait a moment. Here is a spot perhaps half-way down, and that island of rock now towers above us, layer upon layer,

massive, forbidding, and unscalable: at its base is a huge echoing cavern, hollowed out no doubt by the dashing waves in the long yesterdays of the ages. A little farther on is a small *mesa*, and from there it is over a mile to the rim of the perpendicular granite cañon which incloses the river still several hundreds of feet below,—the last gigantic crevice in the stupendous chasm. Behold! the earth seems completely to have swallowed us. Skim the cañon's south rim, and you will see what appears to be a fringe of dog-fennel. It is the pine trees. The two-story house on the very edge of the cañon now looks like a child's toy.

(Trut tells a story of thrilling adventure suited to the scene. What a monumental liar he is!)

Reaching the open mesa, we find a clump of bushes that marks the presence of water. Thus far the walls of the cañon have been absolutely dry—not a rivulet or rill has been passed: there have been stunted, scraggly and scattering trees, but no flowers, nor grass, nor bird, nor animal; but rocks, rocks, rocks, pile upon pile,—they have been everywhere.

Sheltered now by the willows from the fierce July sun, we plunge our tired and swollen feet into the purling brook, and quench our thirst at a near-by spring of sparkling water. The silence that everywhere pervades the cañon is oppressive, and as we gaze and gaze upon the awful grandeur of the place we realize as never before the utter insignificance of man.

After luncheon, and while lounging in the grateful shade and smoking our dry cigars, Trut, seeming to divine our feelings, began:



THE BRIGHT ANGEL.

“Some places is lonesomer than others; for instance, Lonesome Valley is lonesomer than Skull Valley, an’ Death Valley lays it over ’em all. Now, over across the river there,” and he pointed in a northerly direction, “is Bright Angel creek. Can see it plain from here. See? An’ on beyond is the Buckskin Mountains of

Utah. Back in there somewheres is a lonesome place they calls Robbers’ Roost, where a job lot of notorious outlaws herds, an’ where no self-respectin’ sheriff nor *posse-come-to-take-’em* cares to go. It’s the damnedest, most out-of-the-way place in all North Ameriky — bar none!

“Well, sir, years ago two men, so the story goes, hid in there, an’ they lived all alone till one of ’em died. Then the other feller — like most every man with a reward on his fool head, dead or alive — went crazy. One day an Injun gal happened ’long an’ found him on his back with a ragin’ fever a-paintin’ his cheeks. She didn’t understan’ him much, nor him her, — honors easy, — but she knowed he was dry, an’ so she ups an’ fetches him water from the creek. Then he braced up a bit, — seemed to get his real senses partial for a minute or two, perhaps threë, — an’ he scrawled on a bit of brown wrappin’-paper two words, an’ the same he handed to her. Then he cashed in.

"After awhile some Government survey fellers come 'long, an' she gives 'em the paper, an' made 'em understand how she come by it, an' so they named the place what the poor crazy devil had writ, an' ever since it's been called 'Bright Angel.'

"There's others; but that's one story of the Bright Angel. Say, it wouldn't be so bad if the girl had a' been white,—Bronco Kitty, for instance,—an' had fell heir to a heap big fortune like they do in most story-books; but what jars me terrible is to think that a dirty, lazy, good-for-nothin', she-Hualapai—I reckon she was a Hualapai, though she might 'a' been a Moki—should ever be called a Bright Angel. Great guns, just think of that! Bright Angel! Holy Moses!" and he laughed lightly.

After a few moments of reflection, he added, by way of a possible solution, "but then, of course, the feller was plumb locoed—crazy as a bed-bug! He had *that* excuse!"

"She may have seemed an angel to the poor, perishing fellow," some one suggested.

"That's all right, too," replied Trut, "but he had no call to make her out a *bright* one. Say, mebbe, she was a young squaw with three green up-an'-down stripes on her chin. I'll bet she was, for no crazy man would be fool enough to say that one of these here Injun girls was bright 'less he meant the *paint* they wears."

For awhile Trut seemed to be in a deep reverie, from which at length he roused himself to remark:

"Say, I expect mebbe, when a feller's had to herd by his lonesome for a long time, that a female squaw would seem sorter like a angel, an' I hain't possessed none to kick on a crazy outlaw drawin' it strong on his 'magination

when he's makin' his last shuffle. No, sir, I hain't, an' I'm mean enough, too!

"An' say, mister, I'm a-thinkin' that a angel couldn't do better business than to drop in on a stray like that, just at the last, an' beckon him merciful-like to pull his freight an' foller her up the trail; could she? I guess not! I don't perless to say, but I don't think God would think none the less of her for a-cuttin' him out an' headin' him for home for the last great rodeo!"

There was a long pause.

"Speakin' of Injuns," resumed the loquacious Trut, shading his eyes by pulling down his sombrero, "I was once out a-prospectin' down in Hell's Cañon, an' I got corraled by a band of Apaches — 700 blankets — all armed with repeatin' rifles. The chaparral was lousy with 'em, an' they all had their war-paint on. There was just one big limestone rock out in a little mesa, an' so I crawled in under it, an' stayed there four days an' four nights, an' all the while them 700 redskins — 701, if you count in the chief — was a-pourin' cold lead into that rock every blessed solitary minute. All I had to eat was two biscuits, which I split into four equal parts so that I had half a one for each day of the siege," (one can always detect a lie by the over-statement of detail,) "an' all I had to drink was the juice of a cactus that growed 'long side of the rock!"

"Well, sir, when those 1,400 moccasins got tired an' made tracks, I crawled out, calm as a cucumber, an' put up a notice usin' that rock for a discovery monument, an' staked out a claim, an' called it the 'Devil's Delight.' I 'fess up that I then didn't know of 'mineral in place,' but I knowed enough to see that my escape meant somethin'.

more than ordinary. An' I was dead right, too, for I sold that same identical mine for \$1,000 to a bloody Englishman who came out here with side-whiskers, an' eye-glass, an' canvas leggins, a-lookin' for a big propersition in lead. An', sir, yet there's some as has no use for the Apache—make out that he hain't no good nohow!

“I see, you wants to know what he wanted with that there lead mine. Well, mebbe to furnish the English army with ready-made bullets, mebbe as a curiosity for a British museum, or mebbe as a sinker for some of them big stock companies. Honest Injun! I don't know exactly what he did want of it, an' it's been the hardest thing I ever undertook to clear up; but 'twas enough for me that he wanted it worse than I did, an' when I get that kind of a sucker I most always makes a sale an' a stake, an' am flush for awhile. *That's me!*”

We smiled incredulously, and looked at our watches.

“What! Must be a-goin'? Speakin' of fool luck, I was about to tell you a story that's a corker. A story about a gold mine. But it will keep. All these stories about Arizona mines is true as Gospel—though some of 'em is truer than others, an' easier to swaller.”

Some one here asked another of our party whether he did not wish Baron Munchausen could have heard the story about the lead mine—a remark that was caught by Trut's sharp ears.

“Baron Munchausen? Say, mister, it's shore strange that, every time I tell an Eastern feller that story about lead, he rings in that Baron on me. I never met up with the gent, but from what I hear of him he must 'a' been from the Hassayamp; wasn't he? Nope? Thought

mebbe he went to school to Hanks,” and he tightened his saddle’s girth, and swung lightly up to his pony’s back.

“Do you savvy,” he asked, turning and looking back, “that this is the glorious Fourth of July? I’ll bet it’s the first one you folks ever spent where you couldn’t hear a fire-cracker or see a sky-rocket. We don’t set the world on fire an’ make a big racket about it, as they do back in the States, but I reckon there’s as much independence here to the square mile as there is there.

“Now, I’ll hit the trail, an’ go on up an’ have the ham an’ eggs an’ coffee ready by the time you strike the rim, for you’ll be well tuckered an’ hungry as coyotes; an’ after supper you’ll each want an extra pair of Navajoes, or you’ll freeze to death before mornin’. A tent is warm enough in the middle of a July day, but she’s as cold as Greenland’s icy mountain at night. A lunger froze to death last week up at Hanks’s place, so he says; but then you can’t bet your last plunk on that, an’ you wouldn’t if you knowed him like I do. He’s some on lyin’ — that Hanks is.”

Evidently Trut now wanted to set himself right with us, for he doubtless realized that we took his stories *cum grano salis*.

“By the way,” said he, “just betwixt ourselves, that lead-mine story is one of Hanks’s, an’ so’s that Bright Angel yarn. I’ll give you a pointer, that hereafter I’m goin’ to peddle my own goods. I never made nothin’ yet retailin’ other fellers’ truck. If I can’t make an honest livin’ with my humble stuff I’ll quit an’ go back East — to Texas — an’ punch cows.

“Speakin’ of Hanks reminds me that he claims to have

come to Arizony before the San Francisco Peaks was holes in the ground. Mebbe he did, but you can prove anything, everything or nothin' by him, accordin' as you want it, if you insinuate to him the dimensions. He'd make the finest all-round expert witness in a big minin' suit that a court ever laid eyes on if he'd stay bought—no trouble for him to find an apex wherever it had *ought* to be.

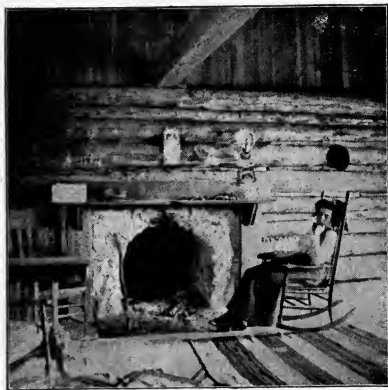


HANKS.

He's immense in his line—the *ne plus ultimus*, as the saying goes. There's others out here, but he's the flower of the Hassayamp."

We soon fell in, "Injun file," and the slow and tiresome, though not uninteresting, ascent began. Up, up, up, and up, led the long, winding trail, until it seemed as though we should never reach the top. Presently the sun sank into the western horizon, and we traveled on in the

cool shade of a perpendicular wall more than a thousand feet in height, while the distant cones and turrets away to the north and east were flooded with a brilliant, golden light that rested upon their crests like a heavenly benediction, and gradually feathered down their sides into softer tints, and these again into a deep purple as the deflected



HOME AT THE BRIGHT ANGEL TRAIL.

rays reached their base. In all Nature there is nothing so splendid and gorgeous as an Arizona sunset, and were it possible to produce it on canvas, it would seem exaggerated.

At length, as the shades of night were fast filling the great cañon, we emerged from the melancholy gloom, tired and hungry, and with a new knowledge of the meaning of the word "depth."

That evening before the camp-fire, Trut's mind reverted again to lonesome places, and, while a chorus of a hundred tenor voices yelped dismally, he said:

"The loneliest place I ever struck was Broadway. I walked from the Battery up to Thirty-third, an' I'm willin' to swear on a stack of Bibles a mile high that I



CHORUS OF 100.

never once met a soul I'd ever laid eyes on before. There's no swap in none of 'em. If I'd seen a wooden Injun in front of a cigar-store, I'd 'a' hugged him till he cried. Gosh! but I'd hate to live there: wouldn't you? I reckon, too, that some of them folks *could* afford to live in Arizony, if they just wanted to. But they don't know no better—brought up to b'lieve that noise an' bustle an' smoke is *the* thing. Why, if they ever get to be angels they'll have to wear goggles!"



IN OLD SANTA FE.

The Cow-Catcher.

YOU will perhaps think that this sketch must be about that familiar attachment in the front part of a locomotive, but there is another kind of cow-catcher. He is mounted on a swift pony, and the damage he does, if any, is not settled for by any railroad company.

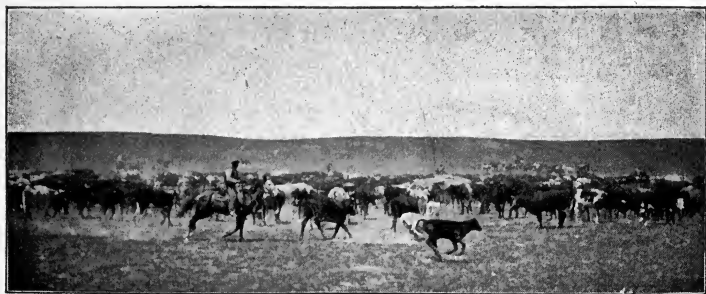
Carrying in his right hand a long, flexible rope in which is a noose several feet in diameter, he runs his pony close



COW-CATCHING.

behind a gaunt and fleeing steer, turning and dodging in unison with the steer's movements, and gracefully circling, the while, the curling rope above his head until his practiced eye informs him that the right distance and angle are attained to throw the coil, when away it flies, with unerring precision, and encircles the steer's horns like a band. The moment the noose settles down, the slack of the rope is allowed to fall at the opposite side, so that, when made taut, it will catch under the animal's hips. Then the trained pony, urged on by spurs, dashes off at breakneck

speed and at an acute angle to the direction in which the steer is running: meantime, the rope is looped round the horn of the saddle, and in a twinkling the steer's head is violently jerked backward and downward, and he is hurled with tremendous velocity over upon his back. The instant that the pony feels the sudden jerk beginning upon the rope, he knows what it means, and he braces himself back upon his haunches quickly,—often sliding some little distance before he can come to a full stop. The cowboy then jumps off, rushes up to the prostrate steer before he can right himself, and with a bit of strong cord binds the two fore feet to one of the hind ones in less time than it takes to tell of it, and the job is done,—the steer is unable to get up.



ON THE ROUNDUP.

In a steer-tying contest, the steer is turned loose from an inclosure and permitted to have a few yards the start in the race, the cowboy starting from a "standstill." It usually takes from half a minute to a minute and a half in which to accomplish the task. Twenty-three seconds is the best record of which the writer knows.

The sport impresses some as cruel, for it often looks as

though the poor steer's neck would be broken, but it very seldom results in injury. Generally the steer, when released, gets up and trots or gallops away gayly, as if he had really enjoyed the fun.

The next time you are in Phœnix, Arizona, you would do well to see how it is done. There is no danger. No one carries a gun. The crowd will be sober and good-natured. And after it is all over you can get on an electric car and go up and call on the Governor of the Territory in his luxurious apartments in the beautiful new capitol, that was built without the suspicion of a scandal.

And after that you can dine in full dress at the fine Adams hotel, where you will see many well-dressed, prosperous and contented-looking people, and you will wonder how Arizona ever achieved her reputation for being a tough place,—and you will realize that there is no longer any “frontier.”

